

DRIVING DANISH DEFENCE TOWARDS POLITICAL GOALS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
2016

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| REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE | | | | Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188 | |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS. | | | | | |
| 1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 10-06-2016 | | 2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis | | 3. DATES COVERED (From - To) AUG 2015 – JUN 2016 | |
| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Driving Danish Defence Towards Political Goals | | | | 5a. CONTRACT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5b. GRANT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER | |
| 6. AUTHOR(S) Kristoffer Breindal, Major | | | | 5d. PROJECT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5e. TASK NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER | |
| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301 | | | | 8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER | |
| 9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) | | | | 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) | |
| | | | | 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) | |
| 12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited | | | | | |
| 13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES | | | | | |
| 14. ABSTRACT This paper analyzes how Senior Leadership managed change to the Danish military as directed by The Danish Defence Agreement 2013-2017. Additionally, this paper examines the effectiveness of communications regarding the change process as transmitted to the public via the media. The qualitative study identifies significant periods in a change process within the framework of theorists Kurt Lewin and John Kotter's Change Theory, and compares each theoretical period to what senior leaders communicated in public media during the period 2011 to 2015. The data used in this research suggests that the leadership did not act within the considerations of accepted Change Theory. This resulted in a lack of communicating urgency in the initial phases of the change process, an insufficient use of public media to communicate and promote an overall strategy, as well as a lack of communication about wins and answers to critique. The overall findings of this research portray an ineffective strategy by Senior Leadership to communicate the changes through public media as a leadership tool during a time with significant organizational changes. The research suggests that effective communication by Senior Leadership through public media would promote wins and challenge criticism in future times of crisis in the Danish Defence. | | | | | |
| 15. SUBJECT TERMS Change, Communication, Leadership, Public Media | | | | | |
| 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: | | | 17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT | 18. NUMBER OF PAGES | 19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON |
| a. REPORT (U) | b. ABSTRACT (U) | c. THIS PAGE (U) | | | 19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code) |
| | | | (U) | 105 | |

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

DRIVING DANISH DEFENCE TOWARDS POLITICAL GOALS, by Major Kristoffer Breindal, 105 pages.

This paper analyzes how Senior Leadership managed change to the Danish military as directed by The Danish Defence Agreement 2013-2017. Additionally, this paper examines the effectiveness of communications regarding the change process as transmitted to the public via the media. The qualitative study identifies significant periods in a change process within the framework of theorists Kurt Lewin and John Kotter's Change Theory, and compares each theoretical period to what senior leaders communicated in public media during the period 2011 to 2015.

The data used in this research suggests that the leadership did not act within the considerations of accepted Change Theory. This resulted in a lack of communicating urgency in the initial phases of the change process, an insufficient use of public media to communicate and promote an overall strategy, as well as a lack of communication about wins and answers to critique.

The overall findings of this research portray an ineffective strategy by Senior Leadership to communicate the changes through public media as a leadership tool during a time with significant organizational changes.

The research suggests that effective communication by Senior Leadership through public media would promote wins and challenge criticism in future times of crisis in the Danish Defence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Most importantly I would like to thank my wife Christine Buchholtz for her honest and critical feedback on my research, and our lengthy discussions on everything from research methodology to English grammar. Your patience and understanding throughout the year have been admirable.

My research committee, led by Dr. Rich and comprising Dr. McCollum and Dr. Ward deserve my warmest appreciation. They all contributed to strengthen my research with their constructive comments and suggestions.

Stephanie Crawford from Staff Group 5B did not only provide tremendous support throughout the academic year, she also provided valuable feedback while reading the final draft.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research Problem

Throughout the last two decades, Denmark has led an activist foreign policy by employing the military in several international conflicts. Both the intensity in conflict participation and the economic allocations have increased since the early 1990s, when army units were deployed to the UN mission in the former Yugoslavia. Later on, Denmark deployed units to join the coalition in Iraq and the NATO mission in Afghanistan, which by far has been the largest mark Denmark has ever left on an international mission.¹ In recent years, the Danish Defence has deployed forces to missions in Somalia, Mali, and Lebanon.

Employing military forces as an instrument of national power is a phenomenon that emerged after 1989 in Denmark. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, Denmark lost its strategic geographic significance, which led to an adjustment of Danish foreign policy. The overall new objective was to gain international influence through increased participation with military forces on the international scene.² As Danish forces engaged in direct combat operations in former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, they felt the immediate consequences of the change in Danish foreign policy. The Danish media quickly took interest in this subject, and in the following years the interest has increased

¹ Peter Viggo Jakobsen, “*Fra ferie til flagskib, forsvaret og de internationale operationer*” (Research Paper, *Forsvarets Trykkeri, Korsør*, March 2009), accessed December 1, 2015, http://www.academia.edu/2487835/forsvaret_og_de_internationale_operationer.

² Ibid.

in parallel with Danish engagements in other missions. Media's exposure of the Danish Defence has increased dramatically since the early 1990s, and is now including all aspects of the military: from primetime news linking political decisions to possible military deployments, to documentaries on disabled veterans.³ The Danish military is now subject to public opinion; not just in relation to specific operations, but also when it comes to organizational changes in the Danish Defence. Recognizing that the Danish Defence employs just under 20,000 persons,⁴ research indicates that 15 years with a high operational tempo have negatively affected the Danish Armed Forces ability to act efficiently.⁵ Nevertheless, the latest Danish Defence Agreement from 2012 states that Denmark will continue to have a well-equipped and well-trained defense, prepared to participate in international missions, whenever it is needed.⁶

The defence agreement was a broad political agreement including all but one of the political parties in the Danish Parliament. Even though the agreement promised a defense ready for deployment through streamlining measures,⁷ it also established that as of 2017, the Defence force must save 2.7 billion DKK annually in order to contribute to

³ Holger K. Nielsen, "*Hvad skal vi med forsvaret*," *Politiken*, July 25, 2011, accessed January 23, 2016, <http://politiken.dk/debat/kroniken/ECE1344734/hvad-skal-vi-med-forsvaret>.

⁴ Including both military and civilian personnel.

⁵ Jakobsen.

⁶ Ministry of Defence, *Aftale paa Forsvarsomraadet 2013-2017* (Copenhagen: Ministry of Defence, 2013).

⁷ Nick Haekkerup, "*Aftale effektiviserer forsvaret*," Danish Minister of Defence, Copenhagen, November 30, 2012, accessed December 5, 2015, <http://www.fmn.dk/nyheder/Arkiv/2012/Pages/Aftaleeffektivisererforsvaret.aspx>.

the comprehensive public finances.⁸ This was implemented by initiating streamlining measures already in the 2013 budget, and at the same time creating financial latitude for development initiatives; however, recent polls still indicate that around 4,300 employees actively seek employment outside the military. In addition, 7,700 employees are uncertain whether they will seek jobs outside the military within the next two years. The poll also describes how 85 percent of employees participating in this poll indicated that their trust in the Senior Leadership was at a minimum.⁹

Even though it is not unusual that active duty personnel express critical opinions about the Senior Leadership in the Danish Defence, the figures mentioned above show an unprecedented increase in objections against the leadership, as underlined by the heated debate between the two in the public media. Chapter 4 will describe this increase in greater detail.

Relevance of Study

In 2005 the Danish Defence and its ability to communicate in public media was subject to a comprehensive study carried out by the consulting group *Strategi, Advise og Analyse*.¹⁰ The study suggested an urgent need for an increased presence in the public

⁸ Ministry of Defence, *Aftale paa Forsvarsomraadet 2013-2017*.

⁹ Epinon, *HR-målingen 3. runde* (Copenhagen: Epinon. 2014), accessed December 10, 2015, http://medarbejder.forsvaret.dk/strategi-politik/Documents/HR-maaling_marts_2014.PDF.

¹⁰ Advice, Analyse and Strategi, *Forsvarets kommunikation med omgivelserne* (Copenhagen: Advice Analyse og Strategi, October 2004), accessed February 13, 2016, http://forsvaret.dk/fko/documents/fko/m%C3%A5lgruppeunders%C3%B8gelse/fko_kvantitative_data_rapportudkast_e6.pdf.

media. The then-current Chief of Defence agreed with this conclusion, and made it one of his top priorities.¹¹

The report further concluded that the Danish Defence was inadequate in addressing crisis in their communications. According to the report, the Danish Defence had a tendency to communicate too late and insufficiently in crisis situations, which created distrust within the political environment as well as in the general public and among employees.¹² This study will not focus on the above mentioned report, but the report helps underline the crucial importance of the Senior Leadership's successful use of public media, and the relevance in researching this topic.

As described, the Danish Defence is currently going through what could very well be categorized as an extensive crisis, which calls for an investigation of the improvement of the Senior Leadership's successful use of public media to communicate these changes. This is why this study will focus on how the Senior Leadership handles the public media, and if they are able to clearly communicate the necessary messages.

To be able to look into this, it is important to understand what communication is. The online Business Dictionary provides the following definition of communication:

Two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning. In general, communication is a means of connecting people or places. In business, it is a key function of management—an

¹¹ Jesper Helsø, "*Vi hænger sammen som ærtehelm*," *Forsvaret* (2003): 27, accessed May 9, 2016, http://forsvaret.dk/fko/documents/fko/publikationer/medarbejderbladet%20forsvaret/forsvaret_nr_1_2003.pdf.

¹² Advice, Analyse and Strategi, *Forsvarets kommunikation med omgivelserne*.

organization cannot operate without communication between levels, departments and employees.¹³

This shows how important it is for the Senior Leadership to communicate their messages to the political level, employees, and the public in general.

Even though public media is a strong source of communicating messages in a big company, it is not a straightforward task to get one's message conveyed. According to Oluf Joergensen, retired Dean for the Danish School of Media and Journalism, one of the purposes for the public media is to reveal wrongdoing, mistakes, abuse of power, and equivalent conduct among politicians, authorities, corporations and other organizations who exercise power.¹⁴ This shows that even though the public media are often interested in stories from the military, it is far from certain that the media and the military agree on perspectives and relevance of a given story, and if the Senior Leadership does not actively pursue the right presence in the media, it will be the media who dictates the outcome. Because the Defence is competing with other public organizations over resources allocated by the political level, it makes it even more crucial for the Senior Leadership to make sure that they communicate clearly to all levels of stakeholders.

There are many reasons why defense matters generally are perceived as good stories. One of them is because the defense together with the police, have a state monopoly on exercising violence. Implied in this is the license to kill other human beings

¹³ Business Dictionary, "Communication," accessed December 6, 2015, <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/communication.html>.

¹⁴ Oluf Joergensen, "When the Journalist is a Spy," *Lov og Ret* (2001).

along with the risk of being a legitimate target.¹⁵ Furthermore, the nature of tasks and high-tech equipment associated with the defense also contribute to the significance of the military from a journalistic view. Also, from an economic and social point of view, the defense is an interesting and important story, because a national military normally consumes a significant portion of a state budget.¹⁶ Recently, veterans' rights and their access to medical treatment and social benefits have been added as another relevant defense-centric news story. This suggests numerous areas where public media have interest in defense matters.

Lastly, it is relevant to study communication from a leadership angle, because the increased news coverage makes public media a fast and effective way to communicate a message to a large group of people or an organization such as the Danish Defence. To limit the vast amount of information accessible through public media and to narrow the focus in this study towards trends in the communication form of the Senior Leadership, this study will base its analysis on communication only from the Senior Leadership. Within this framework, this study will reveal how the Senior Leadership can better utilize public media.

Theory and Method

To understand the narrative that is created about the changes in the organizational structure of the Danish Defence, the underlying perspective in this thesis will be based on social constructivism. According to John W. Creswell, Social Constructivists "believe

¹⁵ M. Andersen, "*Forsvaret og Pressen*" (Master Thesis, *Fakultet for Strategi og Operationer, Forsvarsakademiet*, Copenhagen, 2005), 10.

¹⁶ Ibid.

that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences.”¹⁷ By viewing the data through the lens of social constructivism, it will be possible to understand the social negotiation of reality that is the baseline in the use of public media. A working definition and more thorough explanation of how social constructivism will be applied to this study will be offered in chapter 3.

Another central perspective in this study is the organizational changes the Danish Defence is going through. With the purpose of creating a methodological framework for understanding organizational change and analyzing the data collected for this study, this thesis will use elements of Dr. John P. Kotter’s Organizational Change Theory and model. Kotter identifies eight steps the leader of a change process needs to go through when addressing an episodic change, which in this context will be used as baseline for measuring the success of the Senior Leadership in this particular case.¹⁸

In 1951 Professor Kurt Lewin presented a groundbreaking theory where he suggests that a change process is divided into three phases, initiated by a thawing of the current organizational system, which enables the system to undertake a change. The next phase is the actual change, ending with refreezing the system when the change has been accomplished.¹⁹ Several theorists have refined Lewin’s Change Theory, and the most renowned is Kotter’s eight-step model mentioned previously. Kotter builds on to Lewin’s

¹⁷ John W Creswell, *Research Design* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2014), 8.

¹⁸ John Paul Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1997), 20.

¹⁹ James Høpner et al., eds., *Modestillinger i organisations- og ledelsesteori* (Copenhagen: Academica, 2009), 99-103.

thesis that every social system consists of structures, systems, and norms, which form internal friction that counteracts any attempt to change it.²⁰

Because this study covers the entire period from 2011 to 2015, it would be beyond the scope of this thesis to go through the fairly detailed Kotter model step by step. Instead, the study will take on a more overarching perspective of a change process, offered by Lewin, who first conceived of organizational theory. Using Lewin's theory and understanding of change processes, this study will be able to isolate periods in the change process as well as apply steps from Kotter's eight-step model to analyze each period and study the communication from the Danish Defence Senior Leadership.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore how the Danish Defence Leadership communicated change in the period between 2011 and 2015, by categorizing and analyzing their contributions to public media within the framework of Lewin and Kotter's Organizational Change Theory. By doing this, this study sets parameters for measuring the success of the communication from the Senior Leadership, in a time of crisis in the Danish Defence.

Assumptions

This thesis is based on a number of assumptions, which are made to both focus this study and to reach the desired depth of research. The following introduction to these assumptions is built on evidence, which will be covered in the subsequent chapters.

The first assumption is that with the significant number of personnel leaving the Danish Defence, the organization is facing a crisis, which justifies applying crisis

²⁰ Ibid.

management theory in this study. A second assumption is that Danish Defence Senior Leadership recognized the 2011 Government Platform and the 2012 political agreement as foundations for significant organizational changes. This assumption justifies the use of Change Theory in this study and indicates that the research should include the period from 2011 to 2012.

The third assumption is based on the idea that policy development and organizational design are controlled from a strategic level, which in this study is the political level. It is then assumed that the Danish Defence will adjust to the political guidance and direction they receive.

A fourth assumption concerns the temporal conclusion of the study. The assumption is that within an organization as the Danish Defence, changes have not been fully institutionalized two years into the process and that change is still ongoing. Therefore, this study will end its research with the change in Danish Government in 2015 and not attempt to determine whether or not change have been anchored into an organizational culture.

The fifth and last assumption is that this study will find results in the analysis, however, the study also recognize that it might find a lack of results. This specific assumption will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

Personal Biases

Considering the overarching social constructivism perspective, and critical thinking in general, it is important to reflect upon the author of this thesis, his own position as researcher and employee in the Danish Defence, and how this could affect his perspective and findings. This researcher has served in the Danish Army since 1997, and

has felt the consequences of political agreement on the Military. Since 2005 the Danish Defence has been subject to budget cutbacks resulting in organizational adjustments, which culminated in 2012 with another political agreement, declaring the 15 percent decline in military funding and significant organizational changes described previously. Furthermore, 2012 was the year the researcher was appointed *Aide-de-Camp* to the Danish Minister of Defence, which provided an insight and understanding of the negotiations behind a political agreement. Furthermore, it enabled a unique opportunity to observe how political decisions were communicated from the strategic level and how it was interpreted at the operational and tactical levels.

Since the researcher has been positioned both in the military and political system, he has the unique ability to assume the perspectives of both sides. At the same time, it puts him in a position, where it is difficult not to be influenced by experience and subjective about this environment. It is the researcher's goal to draw from his experiences in a positive way, to locate weaknesses in the Danish Defence and create a framework for others to develop and apply.

Thesis Outline

Despite more than 20 years of experience working with and utilizing public media, research suggests that representatives communicating for the Danish Defence are often perceived as unclear or misunderstood by the public.²¹ The initial focal point of the thesis will be the 2012 political agreement, since it was this agreement that created the need for organizational change in the Defence, resulting in the crisis of officers leaving

²¹ Berit Carius Larsen and Jens Lunde, "*Nedslag i Forsvarets kommunikation*" (Master Thesis, Roskilde Universitet, 2014).

and an increased distrust in the Senior Leadership, as mentioned in the assumptions before. It will cover the period through 2015, where there was a change in government, and a resulting break with the political line. Based on the 2012 agreement, the research will look into how the public media was used by senior leaders to effect change. The study will explore which consequences their communication or lack thereof had as compared to Kotter's Change Theory.

The study is analyzing the communication patterns of the Senior Leadership in public media, within the framework of organizational Change Theory; with the purpose of finding out if they are successful in communicating their essential messages. The communication perspective focuses on how it was used in this particular change process, for enforcing leadership and the efficiency of communication in the public media. The analysis of successful leadership looks at the Senior Leadership, and their ability to act as successful leaders in crisis management situations and during organizational changes.

Primary Thesis Question

The primary thesis question this study will answer is:

How effective was the Senior Leadership's communications using public media to support change to the Danish Defence Force during the period from 2011 to 2015?

Secondary Research Question

To answer this primary research question, this study will search for answers to these three secondary research questions:

1. How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership utilize public media to create a sense of urgency for change?

2. How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership utilize public media to communicate a vision and change strategy?
3. How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership utilize public media to communicate wins and challenge critics?

Definitions

Terms defined as part of the thesis are described below.

Danish Defence Senior Leadership: The Danish Defence Senior Leadership is in this thesis defined as The Chief of Defence, his Chief of Staff and the commanders of the Army, Navy, and Air force. In addition, Senior Leadership communication will also include official communication from The Joint Defence Command, such as newsletter and statements in public media, since such communication must be approved by either the Chief of Defence or the Chief of Staff.

Operational and Tactical Level: Employees in the Danish Defence, excluding the Danish Defence Senior Leadership.

Political Level: Comprise ministers within the Danish Government and politicians from all parties across the Danish Parliament. The level further includes official communication from the Danish Ministry of Defence.

Polls: A poll conducted by a major organization that has statistically acceptable ways and means to survey the Danish Defence about relevant subjects.

Public Media: Open source media, domestic and foreign, and-or open forums, in which the Danish Defence's Senior Leadership addresses the operational and tactical level in relation to organizational changes.

Limitations and Delimitations

This thesis will cover the time from 2011, when the Government Platform was published, to 2015 where Denmark had a change in Government. For the purpose of looking into the leadership change management, this period offered them sufficient time to recognize and prepare for the significant changes they were facing. Furthermore, the described period would provide an appropriate time for the Senior Leadership to announce their vision and strategy for the change process. Lastly, the period should be sufficient to initiate the organizational changes as described in the 2012 political agreement.

The structure of the analysis will be based on qualitative research, identifying essential communications from the Defence Senior Leadership and comparing these to Change Theory. The research will focus on the Danish Army, since this is by far the service with most capacities and employees in the Danish Defence. However, relevant statements from other services that support, or differ from previously presented arguments, will be included.

To understand the impact and perception of statements made in public media, the main data for this thesis will be collected from published interviews (oral and written) and statements, speeches and columns in both independent media and on webpages. Furthermore, political and expert analysis will be used as sources to identify the perception of the Senior Leadership's ways of communicating. To show how the leadership's changes of the organization were received throughout the Army, the study will include relevant columns and interviews with active duty or retired personnel from the operational and tactical level. By including the opinion of the operational and tactical

level, the thesis seeks to show the direct response to Senior Leadership communication and its effect. The comparison between the two levels' ways of responding to each other will show whether the Senior Leadership's communication trends were effective in communicating the new directions for the Danish Defence. To provide the analysis with the background information in relation to financial constraints and political ambitions of the leadership, additional data will be included from the political agreements.

Recognizing that in the 21st century a substantial part of everyday communication is conducted through social media, e.g. Facebook and Twitter, these platforms will not be a source in this research. Even though this would give a full view of the public debate, it would be too extensive to include in this study. This study will only include sources from major news media and The Danish Defence's own publications and media.

Summary

The Danish Defence has been subject to significant changes during the last decades. These include changing from a military force, only expected to survive mere hours should it face Soviet aggression, to a professional organization promoting peace in hotspots all over the world. Furthermore, a significant increase in active use of public media has imposed the need for military leaders to promote their communication skills, especially when interacting with the public media. This thesis will investigate the level of proficiency of the Danish Defence Senior Leadership when utilizing public media as a leadership tool.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

During the past ten years, the Danish Defence has seen an increase in international deployments, culminating with the Danish commitment to the coalition in Iraq in 2003 and a Battle Group with its own area of operation to the NATO mission in Helmand, Afghanistan. During the Danish combat missions in Helmand, 43 Danish soldiers were killed, which is a large number compared to the size of the army. After that, the political appetite for combat missions decreased and Danish ground forces has not seen similar missions since. Instead, the Danish military has change the focus to softer UN missions, and an increase in naval and air forces deployments.²²

The 2012 political agreement for the Defence called for significant changes in the Danish Military as a whole. Consequently, the agreement affected a number of organizational areas as well as the operative capabilities. This research will study how effective public media was used by the Senior Leadership to support change during the period from 2011 to 2015. The effectiveness will be measured by focusing on three areas, which according to Change Theory are essential: First, the establishment of an urgency for change; second, a vision and a strategy for the change process; and third, achieving and celebrating wins along with handling criticism. All three areas will be further

²² Lisbeth Quass, "*Udenrigsministeren vil have forsvaret tilbage på FN-sporet.*" Berlingske, 2014, accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.politiko.dk/nyheder/udenrigsministeren-vil-have-forsvaret-tilbage-paa-fn-sporet-0>.

described in this chapter, and later on, in chapter 4, the areas will be compared to what was actually communicated in public media.

To show how the narrative of the changes was formed and perceived by the Senior Leadership, the thesis will view its data from a social constructivism perspective. Through this perspective, it is possible to show the story that is created by the Leadership and the potentially differing story created by the employees, and how this has affected the general view of the leadership's communication and handling of the organizational changes. This will be done by focusing on public statements, speeches, public media, and published interviews given by the Senior Leadership, as well as the military employees, political and military commentators, and relevant scholar's response to the Leadership.

Public Media Communication as a Leadership Tool

In searching for similar studies to this thesis, it shows that the majority of related research falls in the following two categories. The first category is focused on the Danish Defence's ability to communicate in public media in relation to specific cases. There are several examples of studies related to specific incidents and critical events, where communication in public media has had a significant role to play.

As an example, one of the most significant incidents occurred in 2009, showing an insufficient ability within the Senior Leadership to act and communicate in public media. The incident is relevant to this study because it suggests that the ability had not improved since the report from Strategi, Advice and Analyse in 2005 and shows that public media pays a significant interest in defense matters. The incident was studied by

Larsen and Lunde.²³ In this case, the Senior Leadership tried to prevent the publication of a book written by an operator from a Danish special operation unit, because, as they argued, it contained classified information about the unit's operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Days before the book was published, Senior Leaders presented an Arabic translation of the book, found on the internet, and argued that Islamic terrorist groups had obtained a copy of the book and now distributed it among themselves. From a communicative point of view, the real crisis occurred days later, when it was determined that the Arabic translation was constructed and placed online by the senior leaders themselves.²⁴ Larsen and Lunde's conclusion shows that communication from the Senior Leadership has seen very little improvement since the 2004 report, even though it was, as mentioned, one of the Chief of Defence's top priorities.

The second category focuses on the Danish Defence Senior Leadership's ability to lead change effectively. Focus in these studies is not on communication in public media, but on studying leadership during a change process. Often these studies are concentrated on smaller areas, such as a single unit or functional area. Several of these studies conclude that leadership within the Defence has a sufficient ability to lead a change process.²⁵ These studies conclude that, although effective communication via public media during crisis was a top priority for senior leaders, they were unable to do so

²³ Berit Carius Larsen and Jens Lunde, "*Nedslag i Forsvarets kommunikation*" (Master Thesis, Roskilde University, 2014).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Jens Hyllested Pedersen, "*Braender det stadig?*" (Master Thesis, Forsvarsakademiet, Copenhagen, 2011); Lars Chr Munch, "*Organisationsændringer i Forsvaret - rutine, eller kun for specialister*" (Master Thesis, Forsvarsakademiet, Copenhagen, 2009).

during the period of 2004 to 2011. Despite this inadequacy, Danish Defence senior leaders demonstrated a sufficient ability to lead the change process.

This study will explore some of the deficiencies in these studies, by studying both categories as a connected process, seeing the Senior Leadership's ability to handle change, through the lens of their use of public media. Because this thesis takes its outset in a situation of crisis, where vast amounts of employees seek employment outside the military and publicly display distrust towards the Senior Leadership, it makes it even more relevant to analyze the successes and pitfalls of the Senior Leadership's way of handling the situation.

Public Media

Throughout this thesis, the phrase "public media" will be used extensively. The following paragraph will provide a general definition of the phrase and a discussion of how the phrase is to be understood in this study. "Business dictionary" offers the following definition of media: "Communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media includes every broadcasting and narrowcasting medium such as newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, telephone, fax, and internet."²⁶

When this study uses the phrase public media it is to stress that it only includes media, which are accessible to the public and not telephone, direct mail and other

²⁶ Business Dictionary, "Media," accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/media.html>.

exclusive communication as the definition above include. Furthermore, the term is not to be interpreted as nonprofit media, in which context the term is sometimes used.²⁷

This study will primarily use sources from larger newspapers, television, and radio (including their websites). The study will furthermore utilize the Danish Defence own news media and communication from Senior Leadership on unclassified media, hence accessible to the public outside the Danish Defence.

Theoretical Views and Theoretical Tools

In the following sections, the theoretical context and background for the study will be discussed. Initially, the paradigm of knowledge creation in this thesis will be described, followed by a discussion of how the theoretical tools are utilized to create a framework to understand the problem and focus of the study. Lastly, a thorough presentation of the theoretical tools that will become the baseline for the analytical tools will be presented in chapter 3.

Change Theory

Whereas social constructivism is used as an overall view on the analysis, the theoretical baseline will be founded in organizational theory, where organizations are defined as a “system of systems” and based on an allocation of power and responsibility.²⁸ Because the focal point of this thesis is organizational change, it is worthwhile to examine the organizational theory initially offered by Kurt Lewin, and

²⁷ Mediareformsc, “What do We Mean by “Public Media”?,” accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.mediareformsc.org/index.php/why-are-public-media-important>.

²⁸ Henrik Kjaer, Hans Joergen Skriver, and Erik Staunstrup, *Organisation* (Nykoebing F: Trojka, 2008), 31.

later further developed by John Kotter. This study will focus on changes driven by leaders who employ leadership tools. For leaders to be successful in changing an organization, the organization needs to be prepared for changes, which is emphasized by a number of classic theories.²⁹

As mentioned above, the Kotter theory is based on Lewin's 1951 organizational theory. The Lewin model supports organizational leaders' understanding of the different phases in an organizational change process. Lewin studied human change triggers and developed model applicable to organizational change processes. He named his model after the three phases he identified: "Unfreeze–Change–Refreeze."³⁰ Lewin argued that if leaders understood and followed these three phases, the likelihood of success of organizational change would increase.

In the original theory, Lewin emphasizes that changing an organization has to start with a preparation process where the organizational system is thawing the current environment, and motivates employees to positive change by establishing a shared understanding of why the organization needs to change. According to Lewin, this is the Unfreeze Phase, which enables the organization to change. Lewin's second phase, the Change Phase, is guided by the leadership and allows employees to implement new structures and processes. Lewin emphasizes the need for effective and consistent communication from the leadership in this phase. After the phase where an organization

²⁹ Edgar H. Schein, *Organisationskultur of Ledelse* (Copenhagen: Valmuen, 1994), 277-282.

³⁰ Pernille Hjorth, "Lewins forandringsmodel," Lederweb, March 20, 2015, accessed April 25, 2016, <http://www.lederweb.dk/strategi/forandringsledelse/artikel/113935/lewins-forandringsmodel>.

accepts changes, a third phase begins, the Refreeze Phase, where the organization once again freezes and changes are no longer possible.³¹

Lewin's change model has been criticized for being too simple and mechanical and by understanding change process as a top-down process, why this study also include Kotter's understanding of organizational change. Kotter developed this theory by adding to the idea that in any social system there are internal frictions created by structures, systems, and norms that counter changes.³²

Both Lewin and Kotter find the thawing or unfreezing phase especially important in a changing organization. Lewin emphasizes the need to see change as a process in separate phases and stresses the importance in preparing for each phase.³³ Kotter develops Lewin's theory even further and in addition to the original theory, he entails eight steps which organizational leaders have to go through when imposing changes in an organization.

This thesis will use Lewin's understanding of a change process to focus the research in time and identify the unfreezing, the Change Phase, and the Refreeze Phase. When each period in time has been labeled with a phase from Lewin's theory, Kotter's eight-step model will be used as an analytical model to identify how the change process was supported from a communicative point of view. The entire process will be seen through the social constructive paradigm.

³¹ Hjorth, "*Lewins forandringsmodel*."

³² Ibid.

³³ Kjaer, Skriver, and Staunstrup, *Organisation*, 390.

Understanding Kotter

This research will utilize the eight-step Kotter model to analyze messages the Danish Senior Leadership is sending through public media, related to the organizational changes the defense agreement imposed to the defense. However, using the Kotter model to analyze changes in the Danish Defence, or any other European public organization, could lead to several deficiencies. In the following, these possible deficiencies will be explored and mitigated.

Kotter's work from the mid-1990s, where he developed his eight-step change model, is based on a significant number of sources and it is clear that Kotter's baseline was derived from the study of large American corporations. The use of a theory based on American corporations could prove problematic because the culture in American corporations is significantly different from European, and especially Scandinavian, corporations. The problems lie primarily in relation to the level of employee influence and involvement: In an American context it may be easier to replace an employee who is not adapting to the needed change, whereas employers in the Danish Defence would use much more energy on encouraging their employees to embrace the change.

Furthermore, Kotter could be perceived as manipulative in his eagerness to stress the level of urgency.³⁴ Along with a functionalist approach, where each part of a system (or organization) contributes to the stability of the whole system and therefore is vital to the system,³⁵ it is important to recognize that softer approaches to influencing are much more preferred in the Danish Defence.

³⁴ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 54-55.

³⁵ Høpner et al., 16.

When constructing the analytical tool in chapter 3, this paper will mitigate these deficiencies to some degree; however, it is important to recognize and accept these premises going into the analysis in chapter 4.

To justify why Kotter's change model is suitable in this research or any research of non-US based organization, it is important to look at change from a different perspective and determine whether Kotter's model applies when a political authority imposes change. The following will review two different studies, which offer alternative views on change.

Change from a Consultant's Perspective

Psychologists Kristian Dahl from Aalborg University and Andreas Granhof Juhl from Bedfordshire University offer a number of ways to determine options when changing an organization from a consultant's perspective.³⁶ Exploring these options, it is clear that the strategic position offers an understanding of the political reality facing Senior Leaders in the Danish Defence. According to Dahl and Juhl, a consultant views the environment, policy development, and organizational design as controlled from a strategic level, which in this study is the political level.³⁷ Realizing that the Senior Leadership has a dialogue with the political level and Ministry of Defence Senior Leadership, this study will assume that the Danish Defence will adjust to the political guidance and direction they receive. Dahl and Juhl argue that Kotter's eight-step change model is appropriate to use to understand the implementation of politically directed

³⁶ Kristian Dahl and Andreas Granhof Juhl, *Den professionelle Proceskonsulent* (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2009).

³⁷ Ibid., 162.

change. Dahl and Juhl suggest that even though the strategic level directs the end state, it is still the operational level's obligation to implement the change, which is why Kotter's model is a highly appropriate model to use during a change process.³⁸ To project Dahl and Juhl's research to this study, the strategic level is the political level that imposes a change to the Danish Defence. The Senior Leadership of the Defence must then implement the change in accordance with the political ambition and guidance. Recognizing that this is the reality for a politically controlled organization, it mitigates some of the issues with Kotter's model and provides justifications to analyze the Danish Defence from a consulting point of view.

A Scientist's Perspective

To further support and underline the challenges for the Senior Leadership, Professor Finn Borum from Copenhagen Business School, the author of *Strategies for Organizational Changes* [*Strategier for organisationsændring*] offers a scientific view on change. Borum introduces a number of perspectives on organizational changes. Among these perspectives are several based on the hypothesis that organizations are organisms that are difficult to control or guide, due to various external and internal autonomous elements.³⁹

Borum identifies organizational change from a number of general components:

- The problem that needs to be addressed
- The organizational perspective
- The principal solution (or model)

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Finn Borum, *Strategier for organisationsændring* (Copenhagen: Handelshøjskolen, 1995).

Change agents
The applied technology
The main issues concerning the strategy.⁴⁰

One of Borum's change strategies, which are similar to Kotter's, is the "technical rational" where efficiency is the problem to address in the organizational perspective of a production. This is important to this thesis because the perceived efficiency was one of the key issues behind the political ambition to change the Danish Defence.

According to Borum, the principal solution to technical rationales is rationalization or fine-tuning. The change agents are the senior leaders, perhaps supported by external consultants, and the applied technology is the production units where it is possible to calculate output. The main issue concerning this strategy is its implementation.⁴¹ Applying Borum's theory to this study supports the previous deduction that it is the Senior Leader's task to drive the change process, and it is their responsibility to maintain as efficient an organization as possible.

The strategic position, which Dahl and Juhl describes, justifies the use of Kotter's model to analyze a change process in a politically controlled organization. In this case, the political ambition was to streamline the Danish Defence in order to save money, and this is why Borum is important in the justification of using Kotter in this context.

According to Borum, an adjustment, or fine-tuning, of the production is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership. The two studies supports the notion that the Danish Defence Senior Leaders were responsible for initiating and leading the change process facing the

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 68.

Danish Defence in 2011, as well as supporting the relevance of Kotter's theory in analyzing this case.

Another reason for using Kotter in this thesis is that he is mandatory reading at the Danish Military Academies, and is therefore applied by officers and leaders within the Danish Defence when preparing and executing organizational change. It would seem inconsistent, if the leadership themselves do not use the theory they teach. Having justified Kotter's eight-step change model, this paper will in the following offer a description of his model.

Kotter's Eight-step Change Model

As mentioned above, it is important to understand that Kotter's change oriented perspective can be difficult to apply when addressing public organizations. Hence, only the parts of Kotter's theory that have direct relevance to this study will be included.

In the book *Leading Change*, Kotter builds on and develops his idea in the 1995 article "Leading Change: why Transformation Efforts Fail," that received much interest in regard to his change model.⁴² In this book, Kotter provides an in-depth explanation of how his eight-step model can be understood and implemented.

Later Kotter clarifies what he perceived as key points in the initial part of his model.⁴³ This clarification is significant to this thesis, because Kotter argues that it is essential to emphasize the initial step of his model: creating urgency. If this urgency is not created to begin with, or emphasized throughout the entire process, Kotter argues that

⁴² Kotter, *Leading Change*.

⁴³ John P Kotter, *A Sense of Urgency* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2008).

it is likely that the change process will be unsuccessful.⁴⁴ The following sections describe Kotter's eight-step change model in more detail.

Establishing a Sense of Urgency

The first step creates an understanding of urgency for the proposed changes. According to Kotter, it is vital that the organization experiences a true sense of urgency, which will motivate and ensure sustained support of the change process. The organization needs to understand the need for urgency.⁴⁵ Kotter here indicates that the greatest obstacle to change is organizational self-satisfaction. Self-satisfaction needs to be reduced to fully instill a sense of urgency for change.

A state of urgency is generally introduced by emphasizing the need to change from a commercial standpoint. By comparing economic results with competing businesses or customer satisfaction, the urge for change could be self-evident. To support the creation of urgency, Kotter suggest a number of options to affect the organization.

Eliminate obvious examples of excess.

Stop measuring subunit performance based only on narrow functional goals. Insist that more people be held accountable for broader measures of business performance.

Insist that people talk regularly to unsatisfied customers, unhappy suppliers, and disgruntled shareholders.

Use consultants and other means to force more relevant data and honest discussion into management meetings.

Put more honest discussions of the firm's problems in company newspapers and senior management speeches. Stop senior management "happy talk."

⁴⁴ Ibid., 9-10.

⁴⁵ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 43.

Bombard people with information on future opportunities, on the wonderful rewards for capitalizing on those opportunities, and on the organization's current inability to pursue those opportunities.⁴⁶

Creating the Guiding Coalition

The next step is to create a guiding coalition. In Kotter's understanding of a guiding coalition, he advises against the idea that one leader alone will be able to enforce and drive a change process in larger organizations.⁴⁷ Kotter emphasizes that a change process needs to be driven by a larger group in the organization. In such a group, Kotter identifies three characteristics as essential for this guiding coalition:

1. Find the right people

With strong position power, broad expertise, and high credibility.
With leadership and management skills, especially the former.

2. Create trust

Through carefully planned off-site events.
With lots of talk and joint activities.

3. Develop a Common Goal

Sensible to the head.
Appealing to the heart.⁴⁸

Vision and Strategy for Change

According to Kotter, the development of a vision and a strategy for the change is essential. He acknowledges that the process of designing the vision hardly is a linear process and can be perceived as disorganized. To support the process, Kotter provides a number of steps to visualize how to design a vision:

⁴⁶ Ibid., 45-55.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 63.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 70-71.

First draft: The process often starts with an initial statement from a single individual, reflecting both his or her dreams and real marketplace needs.

Role of the guiding coalition: The first draft is always modeled over time by the guiding coalition or an even larger group of people.

Importance of teamwork: the group process never works well without a minimum of effective teamwork.

Role of the head and the heart: both analytical thinking and a lot of dreaming are essential throughout the activity.

Messiness of the process: Vision creation is usually a process of two steps forward and one back, movement to the left and then to the right.

Time Frame: Vision is never created in a single meeting. The activity takes months, sometimes years.

End product: the process results in a direction for the future that is desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and is conveyable in five minutes or less.⁴⁹

Despite the steps mentioned above, Kotter accepts that the design process is unsystematic and argues that it is the only way to achieve true vision. According to Kotter, a forced and rushed design process will produce a fragile vision, which is jeopardizing the entire change process. In this case, only a solid and credible vision will encourage the organization to join the process.

Communicating the Change Vision

Kotter stresses the importance of communicating the change vision through a myriad of platforms, including public media, which will ensure that the vision and the need for change is actually communicated, heard, and remembered. In relation to effectively communicating the change vision, Kotter highlights a number of key elements:

⁴⁹ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 101.

Simplicity: All jargon and technobabble must be eliminated.

Metaphor, analogy, and example: A verbal picture is worth a thousand words.

Multiple Forums: Big meetings and small, memos and newspapers, formal and informal interaction – all are effective for spreading the word.

Repetition: Ideas sink in deeply only after they have been heard many times.

Leadership by example: behavior from important people that is inconsistent with the vision overwhelms other forms of communication.

Explanation of seeming inconsistencies: Unaddressed inconsistencies undermine the credibility of all communication.

Give-and-take: two-way communication is always more powerful than one-way communication.⁵⁰

Enable Actions and Remove Barriers

To create a solid foundation for changing an organization, Kotter describes how to break down structural barriers to encourage employees to exercise more initiative. By empowering a greater number of employees, these will then support both the vision and the guiding coalition to a much higher degree. According to Kotter, the following areas will remove structural barriers and enable actions essential to the change process:

Communicate a sensible vision to employees: If employees have a shared sense of purpose, it will be easier to initiate actions to achieve that purpose.

Make structures compatible with the vision: Unaligned structures block needed action.

Provide the training employees need: without the right skills and attitudes, people feel disempowered.

Align information and personnel systems to the vision: Unaligned systems also block needed action.

Confront supervisors who undercut needed change: Nothing disempowers people the way a bad boss can.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 111.

Generate Short-term Wins

According to Kotter, a severe disconnect in the change process exist, if the organization as a whole, and in particular the guiding coalition, are unable to build trust toward a long-term change. Kotter suggest that a demonstration of success early in the change process will support the trust building. Success can be demonstrated by generating short-term wins. Kotter suggests following description of short-term wins:

Provide evidence that sacrifices are worth it: Wins greatly help justify the short-term costs involved.

Reward change agents with a pat on the back: After a lot of hard work, positive feedback builds morale and motivation.

Help fine-tune vision and strategies: Short-term wins give the guiding coalition concrete data on with viability of their ideas.

Undermine cynics and self-serving resisters: Clear improvements in performance makes it difficult for people to block needed change.

Keep bosses on board: provide those higher in the hierarchy with evidence that the transformation is on track.

Build momentum: turns neutrals into supporters, reluctant supporters into active helpers.⁵²

Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

Kotter describes this step as a trap for self-satisfaction, which is to be avoided. Even though successes need to be communicated, the leadership has to emphasize the need for the continuation of change. Communicating that the goals will be reached automatically contains a risk of stagnation in the change process and a sense of self-satisfaction. Kotter provides a number of criteria for success in the change process:

⁵¹ Ibid., 143.

⁵² Ibid., 152.

More change, not less: The guiding coalition uses the credibility afforded by short-term wins to tackle additional and bigger change projects.

More help: Additional people are brought in, promoted, and developed to help with all the changes.

Leadership from senior management: Senior people focus on maintaining clarity of shared purpose for the overall effort and keeping urgency levels up.

Project management and leadership from below: lower ranks in the hierarchy both provide leadership for specific projects and manage those projects.

Reduction of unnecessary interdependencies: To make changes easier in both the short and long term, managers identify unnecessary interdependencies and eliminate them.⁵³

Institute Change

In this last step in Kotter's model, he emphasizes culture to a much higher degree than in any of the other steps. He highlights the significance in anchoring the change in a culture. He elaborates this in the following arguments:

Comes last, not first: most alterations in norms and shared values come at the end of the transformation process.

Depends on results: new approaches usually sink into a culture only after it's very clear that they work and are superior to the old methods.

Requires a lot of talk: without verbal instruction and support, people are often reluctant to admit the validity of new practices.

May involve turnover: sometimes the only way to change a culture is to change key people.

Makes decisions on succession crucial: if promotion processes are not changed to be compatible with the new practices, the old culture will reassert itself.⁵⁴

An essential point with regard to Kotter's model is that an urgent external requirement for change is the focal point for a change process to be successful. In this

⁵³ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 178.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 196.

thesis, the requirement for change springs from a political directive and therefore not necessarily a true requirement for the military Senior Leadership and employees. Nonetheless, it becomes the Senior Leadership's task to communicate the requirement for change to the organization and lead the change process.

To sum up, Kotter provides a guide for changing an organization along with a substantial amount of guidelines on how to achieve success in each of the steps. This thesis will utilize these guidelines from Kotter's model in analyzing communication from Senior Leadership, in order to understand how the Senior Leadership intended to manage the change.

Summary and Conclusion

Two significant deductions are drawn from the above literature review. First, existing literature similar to this thesis, falls in two categories, one is describing internal organizational communication directly from the leadership to the organization. This is normally seen in private organizations, where the leadership has the privilege to address the organization without interference from the surrounding environment. The Danish Defence is a unique organization under political control and changes to the organization are often imposed by the political level, as is the case in the 2012 political agreement for the Defense. In organizations like the Danish Defence, the public media will often be present immediately after a political agreement has been negotiated, and the content of such an agreement will be communicated to the media before the actual organization (the Danish Defence) is given notice. Thus, not allowing the Defence's senior leaders to initiate the change process prior to the actual end state is publicly known. The other category is case studies concerning a single episode, and how the Danish Defence

handled the media coverage. These case studies often relate to crisis management, particularly after significant incidents involving casualties during deployments or poor leadership within the Defence.

Existing literature indicates that there is a gap between research analyzing the Senior Leadership's crisis management and their use of public media, a gap which this thesis attempts to cover. Most of the literature on the subject of organizational change processes, including Kotter's model, is based upon private corporations. Not all elements from the model apply to analysis of Danish Defence; however, the research conducted by Dahl and Juhl and separately by Borum suggests that Kotter's model and guidelines are conceptually valid when applied to Danish Defence, or any other organization under political control. In the next chapter, this study will build on this understanding and describe how elements from Kotter's model will be applied to the analysis.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In 2011, Denmark began downsizing the military commitment in Afghanistan, which was the beginning of significant changes to the Danish Defence. The 2011 Government Platform directed a modernization of the leadership along with more prudent resource management. The document indicated that the base structure in the defense should be studied to determine whether a changed organization could contribute to a more efficient defense.⁵⁵ The Platform further directed a strengthened ability to train and mentor local security forces and support security reforms in areas in need of this type of assistance. Lastly, the Platform directed initiation of a study to examine the continued need for conscription.⁵⁶ These three statements from the government were the most significant changes that awaited the Danish Defence, and even though the newly appointed Minister of Defence, HE Nick Heakkerup, still needed a majority within the Danish Parliament before initiating these changes, it was an indication of political determination to change the Danish Defence.

One and a half years later, a broad political agreement was signed by all but one of the political parties in the Danish Parliament. The government was not able to pass all the changes described in their 2011 Government Platform; still, the majority of the

⁵⁵ The Danish Government, “*Et Danmark der staar sammen*,” *Statsministeriet*, October 2011, accessed January 23, 2016, http://www.stm.dk/publikationer/Et_Danmark_der_staar_sammen_11/index.htm.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

changes were approved, including a reduction of the annual defense expenditures by 2.5 billion DKK in 2015, 2.6 billion in 2016, and 2.7 billion as of 2017,⁵⁷ a 15 percent decline in military funding and significant organizational changes.

This thesis focused on this significant period of change and how Danish Defence Senior Leadership used public media to stress the urgency for change, support their vision and strategy, communicate wins, and address criticism.

A Social Constructivist Paradigm

As mentioned previously, the research methodology used in this thesis springs from a social constructivist paradigm. By observing the area of conflict between the Senior Leadership and leaders at the operational and tactical levels, the thesis provides an empirically based analysis, with a focus on the discussions in the public media and the political statements.

Following the perspective of social constructivism, knowledge is created through a given cultural context, and based on norms and values within this culture.⁵⁸ The idea is that knowledge is not predetermined, but constructed through social interaction. Working within social constructivism implies a focus on the relation between reality and discourse when analyzing a phenomenon. This is based on the idea that we are all part of an overall cultural discourse of our time, with specific values and norms.⁵⁹ At the same time, the

⁵⁷ Danish Ministry Defence, “The Danish Engagement in Afghanistan,” *Forsvarsministeriet*, March 18 2015, accessed January 10, 2016, <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Pages/TheDanishEngagementinAfghanistan.aspx>.

⁵⁸ Creswell, 8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

individual is also a participant when it comes to negotiating a given view on reality. Because this thesis focuses on how messages were communicated and received, the perspective offered by social constructivism provides a framework of thought that will help explain the differing views on the Defence's organizational changes. Rather than serving as a tool for direct analysis, it serves as an underlying notion that the Senior Leadership and personnel at lower echelons are both responsible for the construction of reality, as well as determining overall outcomes.

One disadvantage inherent to this method is that public media only describes the official relations between the actors involved, and does not show what interaction has happened off record. Nonetheless, by eliminating all other data but that found in public media or other public communication, this thesis examined the Senior Leadership's ability to utilize their public appearances to employ leadership tools.

The following section discusses the methodology of this thesis, and how key elements of Kotter's model were applied to this specific context. To optimize the use of Kotter's theory, the thesis builds on an adapted model created to better analyze the communication of the Senior Leadership within the frame of Change Theory.

Design of the Study

To support and focus the analysis in chapter 4, this study will construct an analytical model suitable for analyzing the different periods surrounding the Political Platform and the Political agreement. In the following section, the design of this model will be discussed and visualized.

The model below depicts the general understanding of a change process according to Lewin, and identifies the three significant periods surrounding the 2012 political

agreement. Kotter's understanding was then added to the model by introducing his supplementary understanding of each phase. The large boxes correspond to the Lewin model; the smaller boxes within the large boxes correspond to the Kotter model. The two theorists' auxiliary understanding of a change process permits the model to initially identify significant periods, and then to search and analyze substance within each period.

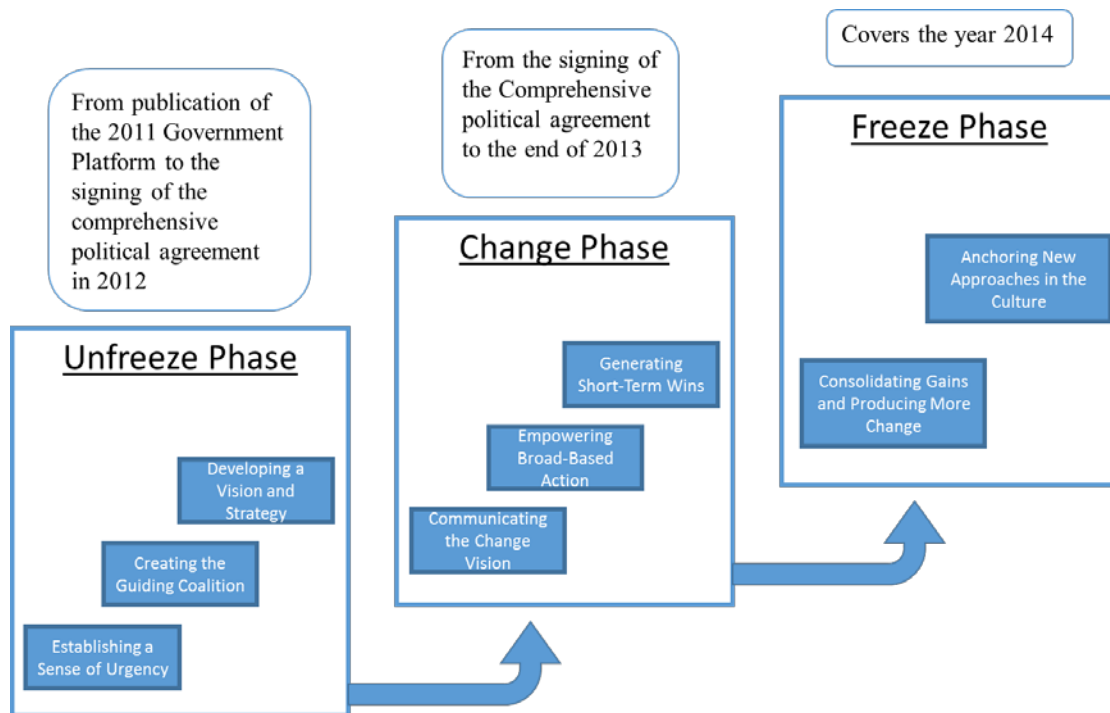


Figure 1. Change Theory

Source: Created by author, data from Henrik Kjaer, Hans Joergen Skriver, and Erik Staunstrup, *Organisation*, vol. 4 (Nykoebing F: Trojka, 2007).

In the following section, the significance of each phase will be discussed, to focus on analysis. The discussion will establish the purpose and define the applicable period. Furthermore, key elements from Kotter's change model are discussed, based on their

description in chapter 2, to establish a set of search criteria used in the analysis in chapter 4. This section begins with an introduction explaining how the different phases of Kotter's and Lewin's theories will be applied to the data. This was accomplished by categorizing the data in separate periods, matching the different phases in the theory.

The Unfreeze Phase 2011 and 2012

As described earlier in chapter 2, the overall purpose of this phase is to create an understanding of the urgency to change the organization. In this phase, the overall task of the given leadership is to get the organization to acknowledge that the current situation is not ideal.⁶⁰ The phase must also include a draft vision for what needs to be changed and a draft strategy for the process. The significant element in this phase is for leadership to “sell” the political ambition behind the change and alienate all opposition to the change within the organization.

As mentioned in chapter 1, it is assumed that the Senior Leadership started the preparations for significant change shortly after the 2011 Government Platform was published. However, it is still taken in to account that the Senior Leadership could not have known when and to what degree the Government would get a political majority behind an actual agreement. Nonetheless, the previous government had months before published their own plan imposing significant changes and budget cuts to the Defence,

⁶⁰ Kjaer, Skriver, and Staunstrup, *Organisation*, 390.

which makes it safe to assume that a broad majority was supporting changes in the Defence.⁶¹

Defining the beginning of this phase as in the time around the 2011 Government Platform, the next paragraph will define the end of the phase. It is important to recognize that the Government Platform implied changes to several services, elements, and establishments within the Danish Defence, along with the Defence Command and the Ministry of Defence. Hence, this paper focused on the organizational change as a whole. This implies that preparations could be initiated very early in the process after the publication of the 2011 Government Platform. If the creation of a changed vision and strategy were initiated in the late months of 2011 and communicated within the first six months of 2012, it would only be a matter of consolidating this vision and synchronizing the strategy with the actual Defence Agreement as soon as it was signed. Working on that assumption, this phase would end in late December 2012. Identifying the Unfreeze Phase running from October 2011 where the Government Platform was published and ending in December 2012 allows the Senior Leadership to take the following actions: identify that a major change process is approaching, based on a political ambition; develop and communicate a strategy along with a vision for the coming change; consolidate and synchronize their vision and strategy with the actual plan; and communicate these anticipated changes. The next step is to discuss how key elements in the unfreezing phase will be applied to the collected data.

⁶¹ Lead by the opposing side of the Danish political environment. Sigge Winther, “*Forsvaret skal spare miliarder for at sikre velfaeren*,” Politiken.dk. April 12, 2011, accessed February 3, 2016, <http://politiken.dk/indland/politik/ECE1253370/forsvaret-skal-spare-milliarder-for-at-sikre-velfaerd/>.

Kotter's Change Model includes three steps in the Unfreeze Phase: establishing a sense of urgency, creating the guiding coalition, and developing a vision and strategy. As mentioned earlier, Kotter's case study focused on American businesses; nonetheless, in relation to this thesis, there are still several of his arguments that are applicable. Kotter's idea to vitalize the urgency by highlighting financial underperformance and comparing the organization to other similar corporations will be difficult in this case, because of the unique position and organization of the Danish Defence. Instead this study focused on his ideas on seeking a more honest discussion of the organization's challenges in newspapers and Senior Leadership speeches, preferably supported by outside expertise. It will also be useful to apply Kotter's concept of "stopping the happy talk." In this case, the analysis will focus on how the Senior Leadership presented the urgency for change along with future opportunities for the Danish Defence.

Next, Kotter suggests the creation of a guiding coalition, which in this case could prove to be challenging to determine, based only on sources from public media. It would certainly be difficult to determine the strength of this coalition, if any. However, exploring the data, this study will search for statements from senior employees in the Danish Defence, who publicly supports the Senior Leadership or, as a minimum, announces their trust in the Senior Leadership.

The final step of Kotter's model in this phase is the construction of a vision and a strategy for the change process. In analyzing the Danish Defence, this step will be the main focal point within this phase, because it will suggest that the Senior Leadership acknowledges that the Danish Defence is facing a change process. This study will not go into a discussion of the creation of a vision and the strategy, simply because it will be

difficult to find evidence of such a process in public media. The study will search for sources that suggest that the Senior Leadership had a draft vision before the Defence Agreement in 2012, and that they were already communicating the strategy to realize it. If such data is found, the analysis will investigate whether it is focused on a desirable future, as Kotter suggests, and how it is communicated. In analyzing this, it is important to distinguish between a plan for the change process and a strategy. According to Kotter, where a plan is the detailed description for the mechanic in the change and the vision, a strategy is the overall intent and the leadership tool that motivates the employees to support the process.⁶² This analysis will not focus on specific plans, but on vision and strategy.

To summarize this phase, the analysis in chapter 4 will search for sources where the Senior Leadership initiates, leads, and supports an honest discussion of the organization's need for change and future opportunities, supported by employees and lower level leadership. Lastly, the analysis will search for a communicated vision, focused on the future and a strategy focused on the change process. Within the Unfreeze Phase this study looks to find data to answer the first of the secondary research questions: How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership create the urgency for change in their communication through public media? Next, this study will develop the analytical tool for the Change Phase.

⁶² Kjaer, Skrivers, and Staunstrup, *Organisation*, 324.

The Change Phase 2012 and 2013

Moving in to the Change Phase, the focus will be on the initial movement towards change in the organization. The significance of this phase is that the change process is now an undeniable reality and already ongoing. The period defining the collected data linked with this phase starts with the announcement of the 2012 political agreement for the Danish Defence, directing change to the Defence because of political ambitions. No matter if the Danish Defence was ready or not, the change process was now initiated. This study fully recognizes that time is an important factor in a change process and the transition from the Unfreeze Phase to the Change Phase does not happen overnight.⁶³ Nonetheless, this thesis worked from the assumption that the political agreement made it possible for the Senior Leadership to initiate actual change along with synchronizing their vision and strategy for the change process. Hence, it is a natural place in time to transit from the Unfreeze Phase to the Change Phase.

Observing The Danish Defence as a whole and not the specific changes, it is at this point impossible to identify where this phase should end. The Defence Agreement runs to 2017; however, even in 2017 not all changes will be fully incorporated in to the organization. Thus, having determined that this phase starts with the political agreement from 2012, this study will focus on initiatives taken and communicated by the Senior Leadership within the first year, limiting the collected data from November 2012 until October 2013.

⁶³ Schein, 275.

In this phase, Kotter suggests the following three steps: Communicating the vision, empowering broad based action, and generate short-term wins. In this context, this begs the question, why is the communication of the vision not a part of the Unfreeze Phase? The reason is as previously discussed: the Senior Leadership did not know the exact extent of the changes prior to the agreement, which is why it makes sense to incorporate this step in the Change Phase. The analysis will focus on sources in the weeks and months following the agreement, looking into whether the vision had been aligned with the actual agreement and whether the Senior Leadership had increased their appearances in public media, as Kotter suggests would be appropriate. Furthermore, the analysis will focus on whether the Senior Leadership engaged in public discussions and debates through public media, using Kotter's argument that two-way communication is powerful. This step will be a significant part of the analysis, because it will support the overall purpose with this thesis. Kotter also emphasizes empowering broad based action, but since it will be very difficult to identify empowering in public media, it will not be emphasized in this analysis. The study will however include any confrontation made by the Senior Leadership towards personnel who ignores or undercuts the need for change or the vision, as discussed in chapter 2.

The final step from Kotter's model in this phase is the generation and celebration of short-term wins. To fully identify and validate any short-term wins, it would be necessary to include a full analysis of the political agreement, which will be too extensive for this thesis. Even though, this step will still be of interest in this case, because as Kotter describes, it supports the momentum and could turn reluctant supporters into

active helpers. Hence, the collection of data will include evidence in public media that suggests the achievement of any wins within the first year of the change process.

To summarize this phase, the analysis in chapter 4 will primarily focus on the communication of the revised vision, following the announcement of the political agreement in 2012. It will study both quality and quantity in statements from the Senior Leadership in the year succeeding the agreement. Furthermore, the analysis will look into any negative confrontations, and celebrations of short-term wins concerning the change process the Senior Leadership had that year in public media.

Within the Change Phase, this study foresees to find data to answer the second and third secondary research questions: How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicate a vision and a change strategy through public media? And: How did Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicate wins and challenge criticism through public media?

The Refreeze Phase 2014 and 2015

According to Lewin, the next and final phase in a change process, is the freeze phase, wherein changes made in the organization are institutionalized. As earlier discussed, essential to this phase is that the organization has embraced adjustments to new ways of working.

Because the changes in the Danish Defence are still happening, it is important to discuss the relevance of this phase to the current analysis. From a time perspective, and building on the Change Phase just described, the Refreeze Phase should start in 2013. It is however, the assumption in this study that no changes have been fully institutionalized

after one year into the process. What does make it relevant is that Kotter's addition to Lewin's understanding of this phase helps clarify how the Senior Leadership sustains the change process through public media. The Refreeze Phase will build directly upon the Change Phase and start October 2013. An appropriate time to conclude this study is in May 2015 when an election was announced, which led to a change of government and a political break in the change process.

Kotter suggests consolidating gains and producing more change as step one, and anchoring new approaches in the culture as step two in this phase. Whether or not the analysis will find any overarching changes already institutionalized along with a significant change in culture, will be interesting to see. However, because the assumption that this is unlikely, the focus will be on another of Kotter's arguments: namely, that leadership should focus on maintaining clarity of the purpose and keep the urgency levels up. This study will look into what steps, if any, the Senior Leadership took to maintain this clarity in the public media. Lastly, Kotter recognized that sometimes the only way to change a culture is to change key people. The analysis will search for data suggesting a change among key personnel and how it was communicated.

Within this last phase, this thesis foresees finding additional data to answer the fourth and last secondary research question: Could Change Theory assist Danish Defence Senior Leadership in leading change through public media?

Criteria for Selecting Sources

As discussed earlier, all sources for this study will be collected in public media, leading to a qualitative analysis. This study fully recognizes the weaknesses by this method and the implied possibility that some actions by the Senior Leadership are not

covered, simply because not all communication is done through public media.

Nonetheless, this study finds it interesting to peruse the proposed method, because it will determine whether the Danish Defence utilizes public media as a leadership tool in such an essential process as a change process. Furthermore, because Kotter emphasizes the active use of public media, this method will be able to look in to whether the Senior Leadership acknowledged the change process they were facing.

It is important to note here that a possible outcome of this study is a total lack of applicable findings. Should this be the case, the lack of findings would also make this thesis an important discussion of the Senior Leadership's failure to leverage public media, or establish any precedent for future use of public media as a leadership tool for the Danish Defence.

Still working on the assumption that this study will find results in chapter 4, sources will be collected from major newspapers and news agencies along with the Danish Defence's own publications. The collection of data will primarily be focusing on senior leaders or their spokespersons and secondly political and military commentators analyzing communication from the Senior Leadership.

Figure 2 depicts the amount of primary sources used in the analysis. The sources were selected across the spectrum of civilian news media in Denmark but also include Danish Defence's own news media along with periodical journals with connections to the Danish Defence. For a more detailed description of each source see Appendix A.

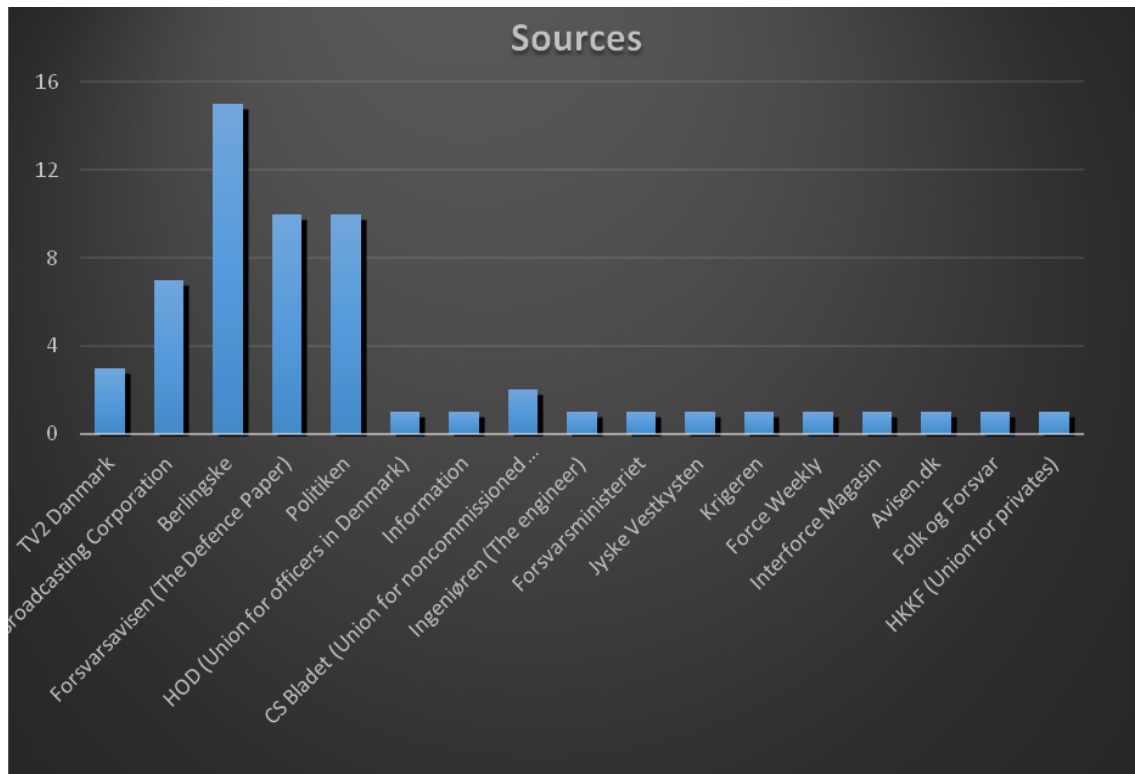


Figure 2. Sources used in the Analysis

Source: Created by author.

According to a study *To the Front Page: Rebirth of the Political Press?* [*Frem til fortiden: partipressens genkomst?*] conducted by Morten Stephensen, Andreas Christoffersen and Anders S. Olesen from the Department of Political Science at Copenhagen University there is a trend in Denmark, wherein both broadcasting corporations and newspapers are objective and neutral.⁶⁴ The study also found that the biggest news media in Denmark are politically neutral in their coverage. These findings

⁶⁴ Morten Stephensen, Andreas Christoffersen, and Anders S. Olesen, “*Frem til fortiden: partipressens genkomst?*” (Master Thesis, Institut for Statskundskab, Københavns Universitet, Copenhagen, 2006).

are based on measuring topics covered by each media and determining the extent of any associated political angle.⁶⁵

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has described the creation of the analytical tool which was used to conduct the analysis in chapter 4. The analysis was conducted through a social constructive lens utilizing the overarching perspective that Lewin provides through his understanding of a change process. To further focus the analysis, elements from Kotter's Change Model were incorporated into each of Lewin's phases. Finally, each of Kotter's steps were validated and adjusted to better support the analysis in this thesis. The discussion in this chapter has led to modifying the analytical baseline depicted in figure 1 to the final analytic tool visualized in figure 2. Figure 3 below depicts the analytic tool used in chapter 4, to compare communication in public media to Change Theory.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

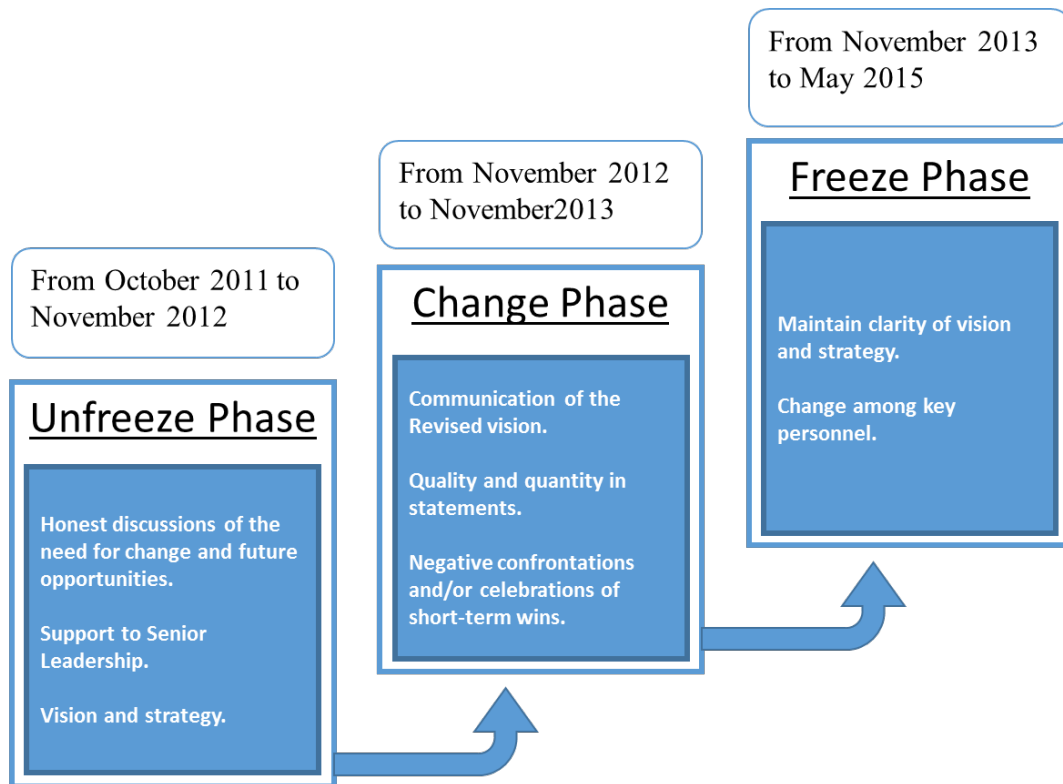


Figure 3. The Analytic Tool

Source: Created by author.

Finally, this chapter has described the possibility that the analysis in chapter 4 could lead to no findings, a risk this study is willing to take. However, the methodology should provide a solid means of making conclusions to the effectiveness of Senior Leadership's use of public media as a leadership tool in leading substantial change in the Danish Defence Forces.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

The first three chapters of this thesis provided the foundation and context for the research along with a description of the methodology. In this chapter, each significant timeframe will be analyzed to find evidence of how effective public media supported the change that the Danish Defence underwent from 2011 to 2015. The overall timeframe was broken down into shorter periods; each linked to a significant event according to the Lewin model. In each period, the research looked for evidence linked to the secondary research questions. Thus, in the Unfreeze Phase the study searched for how the Senior Leadership communicated the urgency for change. In the Change Phase, the study searched for how the Senior Leadership communicated a vision and a change strategy. Lastly, in the Refreeze Phase, the study searched for how senior leaders maintained clarity of the vision and strategy.

The Unfreeze Phase

Introduction

This phase started with the publication of the 2011 Government Platform and ended with the signing of the comprehensive agreement in 2012. This paragraph will open with a depiction of how the political level communicated the intent behind the 2011 Government Platform to provide the necessary context. Next, the study explores the reaction by senior leaders in the Danish Defence and searches for statements that could support an established urgency for change.

The Political Ambition

The Government Platform was published in October 2011 and described the political ambition for the newly appointed government. The document communicated a clear ambition to continue an active foreign policy, with high quality military capacities deployed to support international missions. However, the document also stated that the government's ambition was to reduce national defense expenditures, although the document does not cite any exact figures. Furthermore, the document expressed an ambition to modernize the leadership of the Danish Defence. Lastly, the document expressed the ambition to study the relevance of conscription and whether the Danish Defence should transfer into an all-volunteer organization.⁶⁶

In the days and weeks following the 2011 Government Platform, the Danish Minister of Defence HE Nick Hækkerup communicated both reasons and the main deductions that led to this political ambition. Concerning the budget cuts, the Minister explained that it was a part of an overall campaign across government departments.⁶⁷ The government wanted to take recourses from a number of governmental organizations, including the Defence, and increase funding to welfare, government pension, and social benefits.⁶⁸

The ambition to modernize the leadership of the Danish Defence was heavily debated and according to the Danish Defence Minister, the reason for this ambition falls

⁶⁶ The Danish Government, "*Et Danmark der staar sammen.*"

⁶⁷ The program was called Focused Administration [Fokuserede Administration].

⁶⁸ Morten Skjoldager and Lars Halskov, "*Minister vil rydde op i forswarets top,*" *Politiken*, December 1, 2011, accessed April 25, 2016, <http://politiken.dk/indland/politik/ECE1467995/minister-vil-rydde-op-i-forsvarets-top/>.

in two categories. The first reason, according to the minister, is that the current structure can be dated back to the Cold War, and is therefore an antiquated way to organize today, where the tasks and threats are much different. The second reason is linked to financial management, where the political ambition was to remove financial control and management from the Defence Command and give this task to the Ministry of Defence. According to the minister, this change would optimize the ability to conduct effective financial management.⁶⁹ The minister uses a variety of examples where the Defence Command has piloted poor financial management to stress the importance of this organizational change.⁷⁰

The final component of the political ambition is the termination of conscription and a transformation to an all-volunteer organization. From a broad view of themes debated in public media following the publication of the 2011 Government Platform, this was the least debated of the three. A reason for the lack of debate on this issue could be as several sources suggest that the termination of conscription has been promoted in several of the unions for years.⁷¹ Their primary argument is that resources currently allocated to conscription and conscript units could benefit professional forces more.

The Defence Minister's argument for changing to an all-professional army is partially linked to the budget cut, where resources currently tied to conscription could be

⁶⁹ Skjoldager and Halskov.

⁷⁰ Ritzau, "*Minister vil slanke forswarets ledelse*," Jylland Posten, December 1, 2011, accessed April 25, 2016, <http://jyllands-posten.dk/politik/article4606081.ece>.

⁷¹ Ritzau, "*Rød regering vil afskaffe værnepligten*," Danmarks Radio, September 8, 2011, accessed April 25, 2016, <http://politiken.dk/indland/politik/ECE1385127/roed-regering-vil-afskaffe-vaernepligten/>.

liberated without impacting resources allocated to deployable units and materiel.⁷²

Another reason mentioned by the minister is linked to the overall modernization of the Danish Defence. He argues that conscription as a concept belongs to a time where the threat to the Danish territory was much greater than it is now, so it should no longer be compulsory for young people to serve in the military.⁷³

During the debate in the media, Minister Hækkerup is very clear that the major budget cuts will result in a decrease in the work force. During an interview with the Danish Defence's own news media, the minister states that a substantial part of the revenue that needs to be found, will come from closing down positions across the defense.⁷⁴ In the months following the Government Platform, he did not specify which personnel categories or functions would be subject to this downsizing.

In summary, the political level provided the Danish public and the Danish Defence Senior Leadership with a clear and concise ambition in the 2011 Government Platform. Furthermore, it outlined a number of logical and acceptable reasons why the changes were necessary from their point of view.

Compared to Change Theory, many of the reasons communicated by the Defence Minister display a sense of urgency, especially the financial examples, but also the narrative of an organization created in the Cold War are supporting the urgency for

⁷² Turi Kjestine Meyhoff, "*Hækkerup vil ikke tvinge folk i trøjen*," Danmarks Radio, October 5, 2011, accessed April 20, 2016, <http://www.dr.dk/nyheder/politik/haekkerup-vil-ikke-tvinge-folk-i-troejen>.

⁷³ Ritzau. "*Rød regering vil afskaffe værnepligten*."

⁷⁴ Christian Reinhold, "*Det kommer til at goere ondt*," *Forsvaret* (December 2011): 30.

change. The main deduction drawn from this is that the political level provided several acceptable and feasible arguments for the Danish Defence Senior Leadership to build on, in the early unfreezing phase of the change process. After briefly exploring the political ambitions and means used to communicate them, the next paragraph will analyze what the Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicated in the month following the 2011 Government Platform. In the next section, the study will explore the Danish Defence reaction to the 2011 Government Platform, and the degree to which the Senior Leadership prepared for announcing the Change Phase.

Danish Defence Preparing for Change-Reaction to the 2011 Government Platform

The Danish Defence's own periodical magazine *The Defence* [*Forsvaret*] was published in December 2011, a little over a month after the Political Platform was published. In this edition, the Government Platform was described in length, combined with an interview with the Minister of Defence.⁷⁵ In the editorial, the Danish Chief of Defence briefly acknowledges the political ambitions and, after a sober description of the main implications focused on the budget cuts, underlines his trust in his personnel and the organization as a whole that they will get through these organizational changes, should they be realized.⁷⁶ In that month, no member of Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicated anything to the public media, except for this article.

During the winter and spring of 2012, the political level collects reports and studies concerning the Danish Defence. The majority of these reports provide quantitative

⁷⁵ Reinhold, 30.

⁷⁶ Knud Bartels, "Aaret der gik-2011," *Forsvaret* (December 2011): 2.

analysis concerning the budget cuts and qualitative studies concerning the modernization and organizational changes. Meanwhile, the political debate is ongoing in public media; a search through the three biggest Danish newspapers' online archives indicates that senior leaders within the defense remain silent. This suggests that, even though Senior Leadership acknowledges that Danish Defence is potentially facing a significant organizational change, no pre-operational actions are being communicated in either public media or Danish Defence media.

In June 2012, the Danish Defence's Communication Department issued a newsletter, which summed up the political process status, and explained the lack of information from senior leaders within the organization.⁷⁷ The explanation, according to the newsletter, falls in two categories. The first is in respect to the political process, and second because the Senior Leadership is disconnected from the political process, thus they do not have any additional information to give at this time.⁷⁸ The newsletter indicates an acknowledgement of imminent organizational change, as well as suggesting that senior leaders take too few or no steps in setting conditions for this change.

The same newsletter provides an interview with Strategic Communication Advisor Anne Katrine Lund, who along the same lines disagreed with the Senior Leadership's silent strategy. In the newsletter, she suggests that leaders on all levels should continue to communicate both internally and publicly during these political discussions. She continues: "Even though leaders and commanders have no more

⁷⁷ This newsletter is sent to all employees within the defence via an internal and classified mail system. The newsletter is also available on the Danish Defence homepage (open source), however, not actively pushed to any public media.

⁷⁸ Alan Kiilerich, "*Mens Vi Venter*," *Nyhedsbrev for Forsvaret* (Juni 2012): 2.

knowledge than the employees, they still have a better understanding of the organization and the ability to analyze and interpret political statements.”[*Det kan godt være, at cheferne ikke ved mere end medarbejderne om, hvor resultatet lander. Men de ved mere om organisationen, og de har bedre forudsætninger for at analysere og tolke de politiske udtalelser, end de unge medarbejdere har.*] Her comments were not addressed further in the newsletter.⁷⁹

Findings in the Unfreeze Phase

This concludes the unfreezing phase, which started with the 2011 Government Platform and ended just before the political agreement in November 2012. The following provides a summary of the most significant findings and compare them to Change Theory. In the unfreezing phase, the theory suggests that senior leaders establish a sense of urgency and communicate their vision and strategy. Lastly, this study explores to which degree Danish Defence Senior Leadership received support in public media.

There seems to be consensus among the articles, interviews, and speeches used as sources for the analysis of the unfreezing phase which painted a picture of a clearly communicated political ambition, supported by relevant and sound arguments. The political level provided senior leaders in the Danish Defence with a sense of urgency for them to build on. Nonetheless, Senior Leadership remained quiet with reference to the political process, which they, according to the communication department, did not want

⁷⁹ Kiilerich, 2.

to interrupt, even though communications expert Anne Katrine Lund, interviewed by Danish Defence's own media, recommended a more active approach.⁸⁰

The most significant finding in the unfreezing phase is the lack of any indication of a strategy or vision from the Danish Defence Senior Leadership. Several articles suggest a clear acknowledgement from senior leaders that an organizational Change Phase was coming, however, no communication in either public or the Defence's own media suggest that any preparations were made from a leadership perspective, despite experts disagreeing on their approach. The next phase, the Change Phase, explores further indications of a lack of strategy.

The Change Phase

Introduction

This phase starts with the signing of the comprehensive agreement in 2012 and ends in 2014. This paragraph opens with a brief summary of what the government level communicated in public media following the announcement of the 2012 political agreement. This will provide context for what the Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicated afterwards.

As discussed in chapters 2 and 3, Change Theory is in this phase suggesting that senior leaders continue to communicate their vision and strategy and as frequently as possible in order to link wins to both vision and strategy. Change Theory furthermore dictates that any non-constructive critics from employees are confronted at this point. The

⁸⁰ Ibid.

paragraph will end with a summary of the trends in Senior Leadership communication compared to what Change Theory suggests in this phase.

The Political Level

It took parties across the Danish parliament a little more than a year to negotiate a political agreement. However, in late November 2012, a broad agreement was reached regarding the organization of the Danish Defence for the period 2013 to 2017. The agreement included a substantial streamlining of the defense budget. The agreement establishes that as of 2017, the defense must save 2.7 billion DKK annually in order to contribute to the public finances.⁸¹ At the same time, the agreement ensures that Denmark will continue to have a well-equipped and well-trained defence, prepared for participation in international missions, whenever it is needed, including the Arctic and in the cyber domain.⁸²

The government was not able to honor their ambition to terminate conscription, thus the agreement agree to maintain national service. However, the annual number of conscripts was to be cut from 5,000 persons annually, to approx. 4,200 persons annually.⁸³

The last significant part of the agreement was regarding the future organization of the leadership of Danish Defence. The agreement should ensure a more efficient and streamlined future organization with an increased focus on joint solutions and capabilities

⁸¹ Ministry of Defence, “*Aftale på forsvarsområdet 2013-2017.*”

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

and the ability to continually meet and fulfill Danish international and national obligations.⁸⁴

In the hours and days following the agreement, Minister Haekkerup focused on two areas in his communication in public media. First, he expressed his satisfaction with the prospect of a more modern and more efficient defense, and second, on the fact that the savings on the military budget contributed positively to the common Danish economy.⁸⁵ By focusing on these two areas, he links the agreement back to the urgent need for change. In this respect, the Minister created the sense of urgency that Change Theory recommends.

Senior Leaderships' First Response

Just hours after the agreement was announced, Chief of Defence General Peter Bartram commented on the agreement on the Danish Defence's own public webpage. His statement included a summary of the agreement and a few comments on the agreement as a whole. He acknowledged that it was a broad political agreement, which he found positive, as it normally spells the promise of organizational stability for a longer period.⁸⁶ He underlined the fact that despite the significant changes and budget cuts, this would result in a more efficient Danish Defence; that even though the changes were significant,

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Haekkerup, "*Aftale effektiviserer forsvaret.*"

⁸⁶ *forsvaret.dk*, "*Forsvarskommandoen, Nyt forsvarsforlig,*" November 30, 2012, accessed April 1, 2016, http://www2.forsvaret.dk/nyheder/overige_nyheder/Pages/Nytforsvarsforlig%C3%A5plads1.aspx.

they would not affect any operational capabilities.⁸⁷ His comments do not address the Government's arguments for the need for change, instead focusing solely on which capabilities will be affected and which will not. An extraordinary volume of the Danish Defences' own public newspaper was published in December 2012, just few days after the agreement. The paper focuses on the political agreement and its consequences. Both the Chief of Defence and the Danish Defence Chief of Staff commended the agreement in this paper.⁸⁸

The Chief of Defence stresses that all operational capabilities will remain untouched, but at the same time acknowledges that the savings will be significant. According to him, this will also ensure that the Danish Defence will become more efficient and a more modern defense after the political agreement has been implemented.⁸⁹ Lastly, he recommends all employees in the Defence to read, understand, and discuss the political agreement.⁹⁰

The Defence Chief of Staff is interviewed in the same paper along the same lines, where he provides an in-depth understanding of how the savings are going to be implemented and that it will result in a reduced work force, estimating the need to fire 1,500 employees over the following years. Despite this, he, like the Chief of Defence, assures and applauds the fact that all operational capabilities will remain the same. He

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Peter Bartram, "*Leder*," *Forsvaret*, December (2012): 3, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www2.forsvaret.dk/omos/publikationer/forsvarsavisen/Documents/Forsvarsavisen%204%20web.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

believes that the modernization process will allow the Defence to deploy capabilities faster and more efficiently throughout the world.⁹¹

Neither the Chief of Defence nor the Chief of Staff addresses whether these changes are necessary, which is a mistake according to both Change Theory and communication expert Anne Katrine Lund, as quoted in Danish Defence's own newsletter. The Chief of Staff's comments indicate that a financial strategy for the budget cut exists; however, there has not yet been any communication in the public media that suggests a comprehensive strategy for the organizational change ditto a vision.

From an Army perspective, the initial response came December 7, just eight days after the agreement was announced. Chief of the Army, Major General Agner Rokos had summoned 600 Danish army officers to give the Army's perspective on the political agreement and the coming Change Phase, a meeting covered by Danish Defence and Army reporters. The Chief of the Army summarizes the political agreement and elaborates on consequences for the Army. In line with the Chief of Defence, he focuses on operational capabilities, but in contradiction to the Chief of Defence, he says that as a consequence of the agreement, there will have to be cuts in operational capabilities as well. He says, "the agreement depicts a reduced level of ambition concerning the Army, however, with pretty much the same capabilities as today" [*forliget, set i en helhed, beskriver et reduceret ambitionsniveau for omfanget af hærens styrkebidrag, men stort*

⁹¹ Kim Vibe Michelsen, "Forlig uden fuld afklaring," *Forsvaret* (December 2012): 8, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www2.forsvaret.dk/omos/publikationer/forsvarsavisen/Documents/Forsvarsavisen%20%20web.pdf>.

set med de samme kapaciteter som i dag].⁹² He is not going in to details of which units and capabilities the army will lose.

According to Change Theory, the Army Chief did several things right in his communication. Most importantly, he communicated his interpretation of the political agreement and its consequences, which encouraged a debate about the subject as Change Theory suggests. However, there is still no evidence to suggest that a comprehensive strategy exists.

Leading Change

In the Danish Defence public newspaper, February 2013 edition, the Chief of Defence addresses the political agreement in an editorial. He states that even though the agreement is only a few months old, several directions from the agreement are well on their way to be implemented.⁹³ According to Change Theory, he is doing the right thing. He is highlighting successes and short-term wins, which is positive, only a few months after the political agreement.

In the editorial, he specifically comments on the budget savings; however, his choice of words has changed from his first supportive comments made immediately after the political agreement. At this point, he continuously stresses that the demand for budget

⁹² Haerstaben, “*Mange muligheder for hæren fremover*,” *Forsvaret.dk*, December 7, 2012, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://forsvaret.dk/HST/Nyt%20og%20Presse/forlig2013-17/Pages/Mangemulighederforhærenfremover.aspx>.

⁹³ Peter Bartram, “*Hold dig Orienteret*,” *Forsvaret* (February 2013): 3, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www2.forsvaret.dk/omos/publikationer/forsvarsavisen/Documents/Forsvarsavisen%20nr.%201%202013.pdf>.

savings are politically imposed.⁹⁴ As discussed in chapter 2, it is essential to see politically imposed decisions from the perspective of a consultant, which the editorial suggests is not the case for the Chief of Defence. Even though he acknowledges that the time for challenging the political ambitions is over, and that it is now time to look forward and focus on the task at hand, according to the consultant perspective, he should be more accepting of the political agreement and not at this point start to doubt it.⁹⁵

Next, he commented on the overall strategy for the Change Phase.⁹⁶ He explained that he was unable to lay out a consolidated strategy for the change, because it had not been developed yet. He said, “The process in implementing this agreement can be compared with driving a train while we are laying the tracks in front of it. We know the direction and end station, but the railway is planned and build during the journey” [*Processen i dette forlig er nærmere at sammenligne med, at vi sidder i et tog, der kører af sted, mens vi samtidig lægger skinnerne foran toget. Vi kender retningen og endestationen, men jernbanen planlægges og bygges under rejsen*].⁹⁷ He ended his editorial reassuring the organization that it would survive this tough period and come out stronger on the other side.⁹⁸ According to the sources used in this thesis, it was the first time since the 2011 Government Platform was published that Danish Defence Senior

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ The Chief of Defence do not use the word “Change Phase” but “process” or “implementing the political agreement.”

⁹⁷ Bartram, “*Hold dig Orienteret*”, 3.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Leadership talked about a strategy for the organizational change they were facing. The article indicates that the plan was to form the strategy as the implementation progressed, which is insufficient according to Change Theory, which dictate that Senior Leadership should construct a strategy for the change as early as possible in the process.

Furthermore, the editorial suggested a lack of a vision, which also is inconsistent with Change Theory, which clearly dictates that the vision is an essential tool of leadership.

This researcher has not been able to find any comments in public media from senior leaders concerning the process or progress of the change process in this period. This shows in the fact that in the first six months in 2013, the Danish Defence Senior Leadership is not very active in public media and when they do appear, the topic is often how many and which military establishments will be closed as a result of the agreement.⁹⁹ This one-sided representation of the negative consequences of the agreement does not correspond with Change Theory focus on supportive leadership.

One article in the August 2013 edition of the officer's magazine *Union* contradicted this lack of active leadership, referring to how the 100 highest ranking leaders in the military since December 2012 had been discussing strategy for the change process over the course of several seminars.¹⁰⁰ According to the article, the process was led by the Royal Danish Defence College and ended July 2013, eight months after the announcement of the agreement, and 20 months after the publication of the 2011 Government Platform. The director of the Leadership department at the Defence College,

⁹⁹ Pia Glud Munksgaard, "Disse kaserner skal lukkes," *Berlingske*, March 2013, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www.politiko.dk/nyheder/disse-kaserner-skal-lukkes>.

¹⁰⁰ Morten Thomsen, "Cheferne bliver klædt på til at ændre forsvaret," *Danske Officerer*, August 2013.

Lieutenant Coronal (N) Alan Damm, explains in the article how it is normal for the Senior Leadership to take several months to formulate a comprehensive strategy for a change process like this. He continues to explain how the seminars provided a great opportunity for senior leaders to discuss the meaning and implications of the political agreement.¹⁰¹ Despite the fact that the series of seminars was already finished at the time, the article does not disclose the actual strategy or a vision for the change process. In a search through public newspapers' databases and Danish Defence's own news agency in the months following the conclusion of the seminars, nothing suggests a more active or, in any other way, changed approach to communication in public media from senior leaders. This source indicates that a strategy for the organizational change exists, and has been debated among the top 100 leaders and commanders in the Danish Defence however, it is still not communicated to either the public or stakeholders in any open source media.

Searching the Danish Defence's own website reveals one article from June 2013, which is the last article concerning the Defence Agreement from 2013 in the Defence Command's own news archive.¹⁰² The article includes a 14-page memorandum, which in detail describes current quantitative status of the implementation of the agreement.¹⁰³ The memorandum is initially focused on facts and written in a neutral language, without any

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Defence Command, "*Forsvaret.dk*," accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www2.forsvaret.dk/viden-om/Forsvaret-i-tal/forsvarsforlig/artikler/Pages/Artikler.aspx>.

¹⁰³ Defence Command, "*Status for effektivisering af forsvaret*" (Memorandum, Copenhagen: Danish Defence Command, 2013).

indication of anything but the current situation. Searching various databases in the days following the memorandum reveals that no public media broadcasted it nor asked for comments. The memorandum identifies several successes in the implementation of the political agreement, which according to Change Theory would qualify as a short-term win that easily could be celebrated in both public media and Danish Defence's own media.¹⁰⁴ These successes are, however, not found in any sources.

Critique of the Political Agreement

Since the announcement of the Political Agreement, several of the parts and actions in the agreement received critique from individuals from the political level, which was addressed by the Government by the Defence Minister. The agreement received critique from personnel within the Danish Defence as well, mostly individuals criticizing the agreement on Social Media. However, the first time the senior leaders addressed it as an issue, was in August 2013, when the Commander of the Royal Military Academy held a speech during the celebration of the Academy's 300 years anniversary. The event, including the speech, was covered by reporters from several public media platforms.¹⁰⁵ In his speech, he suggested that the significant savings combined with a change in the education of officers would lead to deterioration within the officer core.¹⁰⁶ Despite the critical outburst, initially it did not make the front page of the public

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Jacob Svendsen, "*Leder af officersskolen fjernet efter kritik af ny uddannelse*," *Politiken*, September 9, 2013, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://politiken.dk/indland/ECE2071684/leder-af-officersskolen-fjernet-efter-kritik-af-ny-uddannelse/>.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

media.¹⁰⁷ The interest from the public media changed, after a quick response from the Chief of Defence, resulting in an immediate dismissal of the Commander, positioning him in the Danish Home Guard with less responsibility.

This increased the interest for both the speech and the consequences in public media, where remarks from the Chief of Defence were in high demand in the following days, but he refused to comment on the specific case. However, in several media, he highlights the importance of committing to all directives from the political level, and that he expects all commanders and leaders within the Danish Defence to do so.¹⁰⁸ The Chief of Defence is acting according to the strategy of Change Theory when he is confronting criticism and repositioning key personnel within the organization, when they are not supportive of the organizational change. This action will be discussed further in the next phase, the refreezing phase. Despite his quick actions towards criticism of the change, there is still evidence of a disconnect in the leadership's communication strategy, when the Chief of Defence acts so rapidly and resolute in both this specific case and the subsequent communication and at the same time still have not communicated a clear strategy and vision for the overall organizational change. Even though the removal of the academy colonel is suggesting strong leadership according to Change Theory, the lack of strategy suggests that the Senior Leadership still have not committed fully to the organizational change.

¹⁰⁷ Christian Brøndum, "*Chef forudser dårligere officerer med ny uddannelse*," *Berlingske*, August 26, 2013, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.b.dk/nationalt/chef-forudser-daarlignere-officerer-med-ny-uddannelse>.

¹⁰⁸ Svendsen, "*Leder af officersskolen fjernet efter kritik af ny uddannelse*."

Findings in the Change Phase

This concludes the analysis of the Change Phase, which started with the announcement of the political agreement and included the following year. In this paragraph, the study will summarize the most significant findings and compare them to Change Theory. In the Change Phase, theory suggests that senior leaders focus on three elements;

1. continue to communicate vision and strategy as frequent as possible,
2. celebrate short-term wins, and
3. ensure that non-constructive critique is confronted.

Evidence suggests that senior leaders from Defence Command level down to Service Command level rapidly and frequently communicated in both civilian public media and Danish Defence's own media in what is here categorized as the Change Phase. According to the data, the frequency decreased during the year 2013. Lastly, the data suggests that there is no clear communication of a comprehensive strategy or vision for implementing the agreement, even though the leadership seminars suggest that there was in fact a strategy being constructed during the first six months of 2013, and that it just was not communicated clearly.

The memorandum from June 2013 indicates several successes or short-term wins in the implementation process, but they are in no way communicated through public media or in Danish Defence's own publications, which, as mentioned, is essential according to Change Theory.

The removal of the Commander of the Royal Military Army Academy was, according to several sources, the result of his open criticism of the agreement, the way it

was implemented, and the consequences. Despite the fact that it received significant attention from the public media, senior leaders appeared very little in public media following the episode. Nonetheless, within this specific subject, the Chief of Defence acted in accordance with Change Theory, even though it was inconsistent from the way the leadership communicated all other aspects of the communication process.

In the following section, this thesis will study the last phase according to Change Theory, the refreezing phase.

The Refreeze Phase

Introduction

The last of the three phases is the Refreeze Phase. As discussed in chapter 3, the political agreement allows the Danish Defence four years to implement all actions in the agreement, why it could be perceived as premature to explore any indications of a Refreeze Phase in 2014. Nonetheless, this study finds it relevant to search for elements of a Refreeze Phase in both 2014 and the initial part of 2015 for two reasons; first, it is intended to provide a more comprehensive answer to the primary research question, second, some part of the agreement should reach full implementation within two years of the 2012 political agreement.

According to Change Theory, the Refreeze Phase should include maintenance of a clear strategy and vision along with changing out key personnel, which is not supporting the change process. All actions in this phase should support changes anchored in to the culture.

A Clear Strategy

In the Refreeze Phase, this study searches for data where senior leaders clearly communicate a vision and strategy for the change. In the first two phases, little evidence has been found that reveal the content of such a strategy or vision. However, as discussed above, the leadership seminars and observations from experts at the Defence College suggests, that senior leaders have been working on such a strategy for up to six months.

In the April 2014 edition of the Danish Defence's newspaper, several articles support that a strategy for the change process exist. In the editorial, the Chief of Defence concludes that the organization has done a good job implementing significant parts of the political agreement and that the organization is on the right track.¹⁰⁹ Despite his positive and supporting statements, some of the wordings used in the article rise the question of how well the political agreement is anchored in to the culture, as it should be in this case, according to Change Theory. As Chief of Defence states, the Defence is still working on "transforming the political discussion into reality."¹¹⁰ According to Change Theory, this should already have happened.

The newspaper also includes an article by the Danish Defence's financial director, who summarizes and provides a status for the implementation in relation to economy. He concludes that the Danish Defence's economy is healthy and well prepared for the coming years of changes and savings.¹¹¹ The article does not provide any overall strategy

¹⁰⁹ Peter Bartram, "*Godt med en afklaring,*" *Forsvaret* (April 2014): 3, accessed April 2, 2016, http://www2.forsvaret.dk/omos/publikationer/forsvarsavisen/Documents/FORSVARSAVISEN_NR3_WEB.pdf.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Thomsen, "*Cheferne bliver klædt på til at ændre forsvaret.*"

or future goals, other than those provided in the political agreement. His assurance of the future finances and the preparation of the change and savings indicate that there is a strategy, but it is not clearly articulated.

In August 2014, *Berlingske*, a national Danish newspaper, published a substantial interview with Danish Chief of Defence. The article states that a growing amount of officers in the Danish Defence are dissatisfied with the Senior Leadership along with the vast amount of changes and savings that came with the political agreement.¹¹² As an explanation to why many, especially younger officers, consider leaving the defense, the Chief of Defence concludes that it is due to “communication issues” and that he, along with other senior leaders in the organization, will continue to improve in this area.¹¹³ As mentioned earlier in this analysis, one year prior to this article, the change process received critique from the Commander of the Royal Military Army Academy, which led to a repositioning. At this point, recognizing that the critique is not coming from the command level, the Chief of Defence is much more prepared to listen and acknowledges that both his and his headquarters communications have been insufficient. Another observation from the article is that he does not communicate any form of strategy or vision for the organizational change, even though he has the opportunity. This suggests that neither a strategy, nor vision, had been fully developed from a leadership perspective.

¹¹² Christian Brøndum, “*Forsvarschef overvejede selv at forlade forsaret*,” *Berlingske*, August 9, 2014, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.b.dk/nationalt/forsvarschef-overvejede-selv-at-forlade-forsvaret>.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Change Among Key Personnel

Change Theory suggests that key personnel should be changed in the Refreeze Phase if they do not support the organizational change. The removal of the Army Academy Colonel was a clear example of this, as discussed in the Change Phase paragraph. No article from public media or defense media suggest that anything similar happened in 2014 or the initial part of 2015. The removal of the Army Academy Colonel was, however, still debated in public media as late as in March 2014.¹¹⁴

The political agreement and the implementation hereof received substantial criticism throughout 2014, especially from retired senior officers and junior and field grade officers.¹¹⁵ A direct verbal attack on both the Chief of Defence and the Chief of the Army came in the summer of 2014, where two field grade officers wrote a letter to the Minister of Defence, which was published in *Berlingske*, a major newspaper, along with an interview of the two. They argue that the general attitude towards the Senior Leadership within the officer core is extremely bad. They offer several explanations to why that is, all of which are linked to the implementation of the political agreement. They have this to say about the Chief of the Army: “We experience an Army Chief alone

¹¹⁴ Christian Brøndum, “*Oberst fyret med fuld honnør*,” *Berlingske*, March 1, 2014, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://www.b.dk/nationalt/oberst-fyret-med-fuld-honnoer>.

¹¹⁵ Lars Keinicke Tofte, “*Oberst: nyt forsvarsforlig er noget rod*,” tv2.dk, April 10, 2014, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://nyheder.tv2.dk/politik/2014-04-10-oberst-nyt-forsvarsforlig-er-noget-rod>.

focused on economy.”¹¹⁶ As for the Chief of Defence they say, “The Chief of Defence has not created any trust in his project.”¹¹⁷

The Chief of the Army addressed the criticism shortly after, and rejected it. He stressed that even though the political agreement calls for significant savings, the operational capabilities are still the same.¹¹⁸ Searching public media databases in the days and weeks following the letter reveals no significant communications from senior leaders confronting the criticism or engaging in dialogue, which was clearly asked for by the staff.

This kind of criticism, almost two years after the political agreement, indicates that the overall change process was not anchored into a new culture, as Change Theory suggests. It further suggests an inconsistent approach from the Senior Leadership towards public criticism, and a reluctance to communicate vision and strategy.

Findings in the Refreeze Phase

This concludes the analysis of the Refreeze Phase, which started in late 2013, one year after the announcement of the political agreement, and concluded in early 2015. In this paragraph, the study will summarize the most significant findings and comparing them to Change Theory. In the Refreeze Phase, the Change Theory suggests that Senior Leadership should maintain the communication of a clear strategy and vision, as well as

¹¹⁶ Christian Brøndum, “Vrede officerer: Forsvarets evne til krig er truet,” *Berlingske*, July 2014, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://www.b.dk/nationalt/vrede-officerer-forsvarets-evne-til-krig-er-truet>.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

changing out key personnel, who are not supporting the change process. All actions in this phase should support changes being anchored in to the culture.

The evidence discussed in the analysis suggests that senior leaders in the Danish Defence do have a strategy and vision for the Change Phase; however, it is not communicated in any civilian public media or in any of the Danish Defence's own media platforms. As mentioned, the Chief of Defence acknowledged in 2014 that the communication concerning the implementation of the political agreement has been insufficient, but no evidence is found that suggests that any communication strategy has changed after this comment.

The removal of the Commander of the Royal Military Army Academy discussed in the analysis of the Change Phase was according to Change Theory the right thing to do. However, it was also the only incidence, where the Senior Leadership took action, and not even after this did they participate in the necessary discussions in public media, asked for by unsatisfied staff members in 2014.

Summary

From the beginning in 2011, the Senior Leadership seemed reluctant and ill prepared for the organizational changes, they should have seen coming after the publication of the Political Platform. Compared to Change Theory, this research suggests that very few preparatory actions were made by senior leaders in what Change Theory characterized as the unfreezing phase. In this initial face, according to Change Theory, the Senior Leadership should communicate their view on the platform and their views on the future for the Danish Defence, should it become reality. Still, no media, civilian or military, show any reaction from their side during this period, even though the political

level provides a number of reasons that point towards an urgency for organizational change in the Danish Defence.

When the actual political agreement was announced one year later in 2012, senior leaders frequently communicated in both civilian public media and Danish Defence's own media. Even though this active communication should be in line with Change Theory, it had no value from a qualitative point of view, because, as the analysis shows, their statements were incoherent and did not show any clear strategy for the Change Phase.

From early 2013 throughout the year, several indications are found suggesting that a strategy does exist, however, the study has not been able to find this strategy used as a tool of leadership. The study has found indications that point towards that the strategy is made as a management tool to control the progress in budget savings, but is still disconnected from leadership actions. This is a significant observation because several indications in the literature review suggest that organizational change was a competency within the Danish Defence.

Throughout 2013 and 2014, Senior Leadership received criticism for their ability to lead the organization through this change process. The research shows senior leaders react very resolute to this criticism in one situation compared to hardly recognizing it in another. This thesis fully acknowledges that criticism from a commander of a military school has a far bigger impact than when it comes from field grad officers. Nonetheless, it shows an inconsistency, which once again indicates a lack of comprehensive strategy from a leadership point of view.

The search for indications of a Refreeze Phase and the process of anchoring changes into the culture of the Danish Defence came out empty handed in this research. This is underlined by the fact that even though the Chief of Defence acknowledges that the communication concerning the implementation of the political agreement had been insufficient, the communication strategy did not change. All comments from senior leaders continue to include words and phrases like “implementing the political agreement” and “the political ambition,” showing that they still see the implementation as something of the future, which suggest that even senior leaders are reluctant to anchor changes into the culture in the Danish Defence.

In chapter 5, this study will draw conclusions from this analysis to answer how effective the use of public media was to support change during the period from 2011 to 2015. Chapter 5, will also take a look forward, recognizing that in 2017 a new political agreement for defense will be negotiated, thus Danish Defence will face yet another change period. Concluding on the Senior Leaderships management of the changes from 2011 to 2015, this study will look forward in the effort to support the Senior Leadership in the next change process.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study, as discussed in chapter 1, is to explore how the Danish Defence Leadership communicated change in the period between 2011 and 2015. This is done by categorizing and analyzing their contributions to public media within the framework of Lewin and Kotter's organizational Change Theory, as discussed and justified in chapter 2. Chapter 3 further developed Lewin's and Kotter's understanding of organizational change, resulting in development of an analytical tool tailored to this study. The analysis in chapter 4 was based on this analytical tool, linking the overall purpose of this study to Change Theory and defining parameters for measuring the success of the communication from the Senior Leadership, in a time of crisis in the Danish Defence.

This chapter will conclude this thesis by answering the primary thesis question on how effective public media was used in support of the organizational change during the period 2011 to 2015. To answer this question, the research was focused on three secondary research questions, which followed the intentions of Change Theory. The secondary research questions were:

1. How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership utilize public media to create a sense of urgency for change?
2. How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership utilize public media to communicate a vision and change strategy?

3. How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership utilize public media to communicate wins and challenge critics?

The structure of this chapter follows the chronology of the secondary research questions, which will each be answered based on the findings in chapter 4, culminating in answering the primary research question. Lastly, this study will look forward, and suggest recommendations on how Change Theory can support the Senior Leadership, when utilizing communication as a leadership tool.

A Sense of Urgency for Change

The first secondary research question was, How did the Danish Defence Senior Leadership create an urgency for change in their communication through public media? To answer this, the study will initially explore the findings in the Unfreeze Phase.

Analysis of the Unfreeze Phase showed that the political level provided a wide range of arguments that indicated a sense of urgency. The arguments were both financial and organizational, which according to Change Theory are feasible when establishing a sense of urgency. The analysis shows how some of these arguments were repeated by Senior Leaders in the Danish Defence, which initially gave the impression that Senior Leadership would adapt the political narrative and build on the establishment of the urgency for change. However, analysis also showed that after the initial response, senior leaders did not pursue this narrative any further. In fact, evidence was found in both the Unfreeze Phase and the Change Phase that senior leaders distanced themselves from the political agreement, thus, distanced themselves from the political narrative that initially created the sense of urgency. Furthermore, no evidence is found that Senior Leadership created any alternative narrative that would create this sense of urgency.

To answer secondary research question one, this study has found that even though the political level created a clear urgency for change, the Danish Defence Senior Leadership did very little to build and further develop this in their communication in public media. Evidence shows that senior leaders focused on details in the agreement instead of taking ownership of the agreement and leading the change process.

Vision and Change Strategy

The second secondary research question was how Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicated their vision and a change strategy through public media. To answer this question the study will look at findings in all three phases.

In the initial phase, the Unfreeze Phase, the findings show that senior leaders clearly acknowledged the coming of significant organizational changes, however, no communication in either public, nor the defense's own media suggest that any preparations were made from a leadership perspective.

In the Change Phase the evidence shows that a strategy is in fact being constructed at seminars hosted by the Leadership Department at the Royal Danish Defence College. Even though a few articles mention the thoughts behind these seminars and the supposed results leading to a strategy, no evidence is found that leadership is communicating this alleged strategy at any point, neither during the Change Phase nor the Refreeze Phase.

The Chief of Defence argued that the strategy was constructed as the change process progressed, but from the sources used in this research, it is impossible to determine whether this is a deliberate and comprehensive strategy. Trusting the Chief of Defence's argument that there was in fact a strategy, did not reflect in public media nor

the Danish Defence's own news media, so the conclusion must be, that the Senior Leadership did not have success communicating this clearly to the public or to their own employees.

Several sources recon that a financial strategy existed, but as this study shows the economic strategy was disconnected from the leadership's action in other areas of the change process. The lack of coherence in the leadership's actions shows that a comprehensive strategy and vision never was communicated in any of the three phases, and based on findings this study will go even further and question whether such an overall strategy and vision was ever created for the organizational change.

Evidence shows, Danish Defence Senior Leadership never communicated neither a vision nor a change strategy through public media. Evidence furthermore shows several opportunities where such could have been communicated. It is troubling that Senior Leadership never communicated these things, especially because both visions and strategies are inherent to the military profession.

Wins and Criticism

The third secondary research question was how Danish Defence Senior Leadership communicated wins and challenged criticism through public media. To answer this, the study will draw from the findings in all three phases.

In the Unfreeze Phase the study found communication expert Anne Katrine Lund who criticized senior leaders' lack of communication in this phase. Even though Anne Katrine Lund was cited in a Danish Defence newsletter, nobody from the Senior Leadership challenged or commented on her remarks in public media. Having an expert criticizing the leadership like that in the Defence's own newsletter, without them

commenting on it, is highly self-contradictory and it certainly indicates an unwillingness to lead and take control of the change process.

Throughout the Change Phase and the Refreeze Phase, evidence shows several successes communicated primarily within the Danish Defence own media, except a few in public media. Nonetheless, these successes was never promoted as a win or utilized as a tool to support leaders in leading the change process.

Concerning criticism the study disclosed inconsistencies in leadership approach, and the approach is very similar, concerning communication in public media in relation to this criticism; as little communication as possible seems to be the approach, according to the findings.

In conclusion, this study finds a deficiency in Senior Leaderships communication of wins and in challenging criticism in all three phases, which could be a result of the lack of strategy. It portrays a Senior Leadership with little ownership of the changes and therefore an absence of leadership in a significant period for the Danish Defence.

Effective use of Public Media in Organizational Change

Having answered the three secondary research questions enables this study to answer the primary research question: How effectively was public media used in support of the organizational change during the period 2011 to 2015? This question is linked to the overall purpose of this qualitative study, which was to explore how the Danish Defence Leadership communicated change in the period between 2011 and 2015 by categorizing and analyzing their contributions to public media within the framework of Lewin and Kotter's organizational Change Theory.

Both theorists emphasized the importance of creating the urgency for change, formulating a vision, and developing a strategy for the change process. The fact that the Danish Defence's own media platform is quite extensive means that the leadership had plenty of opportunity to communicate a strategy. The civilian public media's interest in Defence matters supports the implication that senior leaders would have had no problem communicating messages in alignment with Change Theory. Nonetheless, this thesis has been unable to find communication from Senior Leadership that gives the impression that public media was used as a leadership tool in this change process. It is therefore the conclusion and the answer to the primary research question, that Senior Leadership did not use public media effectively in support of the organizational change during 2011 to 2015.

Recommendations

In the period from 2011 to 2015, the attitude towards Danish Defence Senior Leadership deteriorated within the organization, suggesting that the leadership did not lead this specific change process successfully. It is therefore relevant to ask whether elements from Change Theory could assist the leadership in their communication in public media. In all three phases, this study found significant inconsistencies with Change Theory in senior leader's communication in public media. This suggests the basic elements from Change Theory were not utilized when communicating in public media. As findings also show, both the political agreement, Danish Defence Senior Leadership's implementation, and their communication received criticism from both experts and personnel, which suggest that Senior Leadership could benefit from optimizing their approach and strategy, or lack hereof. It is therefore this thesis's recommendation that

elements and suggestions from Change Theory significantly would improve senior ability to lead change in public media.

To implement and utilize elements from Change Theory in leadership communication it is the recommendation to change the overall approach to these organizational changes imposed by the political level. To do this successfully Danish Defence Senior Leadership need to embrace and build on the need for urgency created by the political level, and make it relevant for the employees in the Danish Defence.

In addition, it is the recommendation, that Senior Leadership in the future, more rapidly develops a vision and a strategy for the change process, and uses these products as a leadership tool in their communication. If used effective, as recommended, Senior Leadership will be able to link all communication and actions to their vision and strategy and thereby act more consistently in their communication.

Change Theory is mandatory curriculum for Danish officers in their professional education, which support this thesis recommendation to utilize elements from Change Theory in Senior Leaderships' communication strategy and thereby actively use public media as a leadership tool in leading organizational change.

Areas for Further Research

This thesis explored a change process limited to public media, which displayed findings without any background knowledge to why decisions were or were not made. To further strengthen or contradict findings and conclusions in this study, further research could explore the development of the specific communication strategy among the Senior Leadership. Combined with interviews of representatives within the Senior Leadership as

well as communication advisers would add an important element to the research, and could provide an explanation to why communication was conducted the way it was.

A second approach to balance this research could be done by exploring the overall approach to organizational change. By interviewing Alan Damm and other participants at the 2013 leadership seminars, research would acquire a more in-depth knowledge of the actual strategy for the organizational change as well as adopting the analysis model even farther regarding the specific structures of the defense working it applicable in coming change processes.¹¹⁹ Both recommended future studies are highly relevant, recognizing that Denmark, in very few months once again will face a political demand for organizational change.

¹¹⁹ Alan Damm was the leader of the 2013 seminars, set out to develop a strategy for the change process.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC MEDIA SOURCES

This appendix will outline all sources found in public media and used in the analysis.

Television Stations

TV2 Danmark (TV2 Denmark)

TV 2 Danmark is Denmark's most-watched channel, TV 2. TV 2 DANMARK A/S is owned by the Danish state and the public service channel TV 2 is operated on a commercial basis. TV 2 is partially funded by subscription.¹²⁰

Danmarks Radio (Danish Broadcasting Corporation)

DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation) was founded in 1925 as a public service organization. DR is an independent license financed public institution comprising television, radio, and online services.¹²¹

Major Newspapers

Berlingske

Berlingske is one of the biggest Danish newspapers with 661.000 readers and 2.4 million web users each month.¹²²

¹²⁰ TV2 Denmark, "TV2 in Short," accessed April 27, 2016, <http://omtv2.tv2.dk/fakta/tv-2-in-short/>.

¹²¹ Danish Broadcasting Corporation, "about dr," accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.dr.dk/om-dr/about-dr>.

¹²² Berlingske Media, "About us," accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.berlingskemedia.dk/about-us/>.

Politiken

Politiken is one of the biggest newspapers in Denmark with just short of 100.000 daily editions and more 120.000 editions in the weekends. Their web news has about 50 million hits per month.¹²³

Information

Information is one of the bigger newspapers in Denmark, with a little more than 20.000 editions daily of their printed version. Combined with their internet version, the paper has over 100.000 readers daily.¹²⁴

Avisen.dk

Avisen.dk is a free online based news media. The media is independent of political and economic interest.¹²⁵

Regional Newspapers

Jyske Vestkysten

Jyske Vestkysten is the biggest regional newspaper and has short of 70.000 daily editions in the western part of Denmark. The paper is independent of political interests.¹²⁶

¹²³ Wikipedia, “*Politiken*,” accessed April 30, 2016, <https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politiken>.

¹²⁴ Wikipedia, “*Dagbladet Information*,” accessed April 30, 2016, https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dagbladet_Information.

¹²⁵ Avisen.dk, “*Velkommen på Avisen.dk*,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.avisen.dk/omavisen>.

¹²⁶ Wikipedia, “*Jyske Vestkysten*,” accessed April 30, 2016, <https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/JyskeVestkysten>.

Military Unions

Centralforeningen for stampersonel (Union for noncommissioned officers)

The union has just under 9.000 members from all services. The magazine debates current topics related to the Danish Defence.¹²⁷

Hovedorganisationen af Officerer i Danmark (Union for officers in Denmark)

The Union is each year publishing more than 5.000 printed magazines and sustaining a web version. Both media platforms are addressing its members, but are accessible for the public as well.¹²⁸

Hærens Konstabel- og Korporalforening (Union for privates)

The Union is a democratic organization and has their own magazine, which is published four times a year with 5.000 editions.¹²⁹

Specialized Magazines

Ingeniøren (The Engineer)

The Engineer is the biggest media for matters related to technology and natural science. The magazine is economically and politically independent and 68.000 printed

¹²⁷ *Centralforeningen for stampersonel*, “Hvem er vi,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.cs.dk/node/13>.

¹²⁸ *Hovedorganisationen af Officerer i Danmark*, “HOD Bladet,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.hod.dk/blad.asp#VyTPKaQ3PIU>.

¹²⁹ *HKKF*, “om HKKF,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.hkkf.dk/Om-HKKF.aspx>.

editions are published each Friday. The web version has about 180.000 users per month.¹³⁰

Folk og Forsvar

Folk og Forsvar is a nationwide organization, independent of political interest. Their purpose is to inform and communicate the general population about defense and security matters.¹³¹

Interforce Magasin

Interforce is a corporation between Danish Defence and 1800 private as well as public civilian businesses. Their magazine is published four times a year, with about 8.000 printed editions and a web version.¹³²

Force Weekly

Force Weekly is Denmark's largest military news portal. *Force Weekly* is a non-profit organization and acts independently of political, organizational, or financial interests. Their goal is to create a permanent place for all interested in military news, military equipment, books, films and subjects related to the political aspect of defense

¹³⁰ *Ingeniøren*, "Om Ingeniøren," accessed April 30, 2016, <https://ing.dk/mediehuset>.

¹³¹ *Netvaerksportalen*, "folk og forsvare," accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.netvaerksportalen.dk/folk-forsvar>.

¹³² Inter Force, "Hvad er Inter Froce," accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.interforce.dk/content/hvad-er-interforce>.

and security, and cooperating with the Press Council to ensure sound journalistic practices.¹³³

Krigheren (The Warrior)

The Warrior is a private and independent web based news media, covering defense related topics. The Warrior is a member of the Press Council (The Press Council is an independent, public tribunal which deals with complaints about the mass media).¹³⁴

Danish Defence Newspaper

Forsvarsavisen (The Defence Paper)

The Danish Defence Command produces this paper in close corporation with the operative and functional services. The Paper is published ten times a year.¹³⁵

¹³³ Force Weekly, “About Force Weekly,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://forceweekly.com/about-forceweekly/?lang=en>.

¹³⁴ *Krigheren*, “*Krigheren Om Os*,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://krigheren.dk/omos/>.

¹³⁵ *Forsvaret*, “*Velkommen til Forsvarsavisen*,” accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www2.forsvaret.dk/omos/publikationer/forsvarsavisen/Pages/fsv-avisen.aspx>.

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